

Arabs not included in Libyan ban

NICOSIA (R) — Libya said Monday a recent ban on hiring foreign blue-collar workers did not apply to Arabs. The official Libyan News Agency (JANA) was commenting on a decree last Friday by Training and Vocational Training Minister Mustouf Mohamed Mustouf banning foreign workers, except Palestinians, from working in Libya. "The ban on Arab workers working in... construction, agriculture and production," it said. It added: "The Great Jamahiriya (Libya) is a land for all Arabs and they have the right to residency, ownership (free) movement and taking political decisions in people's congresses." Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians, Palestinians and Sudanese work mainly in Libya's ambitious agricultural projects. Arabs generally do not need visas to visit Tripoli. Libya has in recent months deported hundreds of Nigerian workers amid reports that Nigeria and Israel were moving to restore diplomatic relations, severed by Lagos during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Jordan condemns storming of Sharia Court

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Monday strongly condemned Israel's storming of the Sharia (Islamic) Court in Jerusalem as an unprecedented crime and called on the United States government and other parties involved in the peace process to put an end to such atrocities. Reports from the occupied Jerusalem said that Israeli border police and security forces had stormed the court and its adjacent offices in the holy city stealing away important historic documents. "This crime reaffirms the fact that Israel is pursuing aggressive policies in flagrant violation of all values and principles in a manner that would offend the feelings of millions of Arabs and Muslims," said Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber. "As soon as the reports came in, the Jordanian government contacted the U.S. government and other concerned parties to inform them of this serious act against the Sharia Court which houses documents dating back to more than 500 years," Dr. Abu Jaber said. He said that the Jordanian government would follow up the matter with Arab and foreign nations to prevent a recurrence of such atrocities and insure the return of the stolen documents to the court.

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PLO team arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — A Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) delegation arrived in Amman Monday on a several-day visit to Jordan for talks with Jordanian officials on the peace process. The delegation comprises PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas, Yasser Abed Rabbo, Sulaiman Al Najjar and Abdullah Al Hourani. The delegation was received upon arrival by Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Al Tayyeb Abdul Rahim.

Pope, Mubarak discuss peace efforts

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul II and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak discussed prospects for peace in the Middle East Monday following the start of Israeli-Arab talks in Madrid. A Vatican statement emphasised the important role Egypt plays in the region and stressed the need for "dialogue and negotiations" in achieving peace. Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro said he believed Mr. Mubarak renewed an invitation to the Pope to visit Egypt. The late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat first invited Pope John Paul but no date has ever been set. Mr. Navarro said he did not know if the Pope and Mubarak discussed U.S. attempts for a coordinated international response against Libya over the destruction of a New York-bound Pan Am airliner three years ago. (See page 2).

Husak dead at 70

PRAGUE (AP) — Gustav Husak, who led Czechoslovakia during two decades of communist rule, died Monday, the official CSK news agency said. He was 78. Mr. Husak underwent several cancer operations last year, and was hospitalised Nov. 8. He reportedly had been in a coma since last week. Mr. Husak replaced Alexander Dubcek as Communist Party general secretary in April 1969, and was elected president in 1975. He was forced to resign as president on Dec. 10, 1989, as Czechoslovakia's "velvet revolution" threw off decades of communist rule. After resigning, he lived in seclusion. He died one day after the second anniversary of the student's protest that sparked the 1989 revolution.

Iran Air resumes flights to Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Iran Air has resumed flights to Kuwait after an 11-year break, civil aviation officials said Monday. They said an Iran Air Boeing 747 landed in Kuwait Saturday on the first flight by the Iranian carrier since the Iran-Iraq war started in September 1980.

Kuwait ruler starts Kremlin talks

MOSCOW (R) — The emir of Kuwait, indebted to the Kremlin for supporting the U.S.-led force during the Gulf war, met Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev Monday, TASS news agency said. Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah arrived in Moscow from China Sunday as part of a goodwill tour. Mr. Gorbachev and the emir due to discuss Soviet-Kuwaiti bilateral relations and some regional problems, TASS said. Sheikh Jaber was scheduled to meet Russian Republic leader Boris Yeltsin later Monday.

2 killed in S. Lebanon clashes

TYRE, Lebanon (R) — Two people were killed in South Lebanon Monday in fighting between two rival groups, security sources said. Militants of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) group and the Syrian-backed Amal militia fought with mortars and machineguns in the village of Tair Debbah, 76 kilometres south of Beirut, they said. Amal's senior security officer in the village and a Hizbollah fighter were killed before a Lebanese army unit backed by two tanks intervened and stopped the clashes, they added.

Hostages Waite, Sutherland freed

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — British Hostage Terry Waite and American hostage Thomas Sutherland, freed in Lebanon by their kidnappers Monday afternoon, have reached Damascus, an official source said.

Preparations were under way for them to be handed over to their countries' ambassadors at the Syrian Foreign Ministry, the source said.

A British air force plane with a medical team and Mr. Waite's brother on board was on its way to Syria from Cyprus.

Mr. Sutherland, 60, an academic at the American University of Beirut, had spent 2,355 days in captivity, more than any other hostage except American journalist Terry Anderson.

Mr. Waite, 52, a Church of England envoy seized in 1987 while on a mission to release previous victims of the kidnap groups, had spent 1,763 days as a

hostage. On board the Royal Air Force VC-10 airliner with David Waite and the medical team were three Foreign Office officials and representatives of the archbishop of Canterbury.

Israel welcomed the release of Mr. Waite and Mr. Sutherland but said it would not release any Arab prisoners in response.

A defence ministry statement also said Israel hoped mediation efforts by U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar would bring about the release of all Western hostages and missing or captive Israeli soldiers.

"We express our hope the secretary's efforts will be fruitful and that all hostages will finally be released as well as captive and missing Israeli soldiers," the statement said.

"Israel is still waiting for clear information about air force navigator Ron Arad and our other

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Somali president reportedly toppled

NAIROBI (Agencies) — The president of Somalia has been overthrown by a rival clan leader, sources quoted the country's official radio as saying Monday.

The report could not be immediately confirmed. The sources, who include diplomats and aid workers, quoted the radio report as saying that General Mohammad Farrah Aideded had toppled President Ali Mahdi Mohammad, who has ruled the Horn of Africa nation for 10 months. The sources spoke on condition of anonymity.

The report follows two days of fighting in Mogadishu, the Somali capital, between tribal factions of the ruling United Somali Congress (USC) that overthrew President Mohammad Siad Barre in January and named Mr. Ali Mahdi to the top post of the strategically located country between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

The radio report did not say when Mr. Ali Mahdi was removed from power.

Italy's Ambassador to Somalia, Mario Sica, told Reuters in Nairobi that 18 staff from his embassy in Mogadishu had been freed unhurt after Somali troops loyal to Gen. Aideded seized them.

Earlier reports spoke of 20 staff, but Mr. Sica said he and one other were on a routine visit to neighbouring Kenya.

"I can confirm that they are all absolutely safe," he said.

Mr. Sica said the embassy staff were taken after undisputed troops loyal to Gen. Aideded looted the embassy. A second group of soldiers rescued them and took them to Gen. Aideded's headquarters.

"They were comforted by Aideded, they were all unharmed and have all been released," Mr. Sica said.

He said most of the staff were now in the hands of the French Medecins sans Frontieres humanitarian aid organisation. Mr. Sica declined to comment on reports that Gen. Aideded was now in control of the city.

Telecommunications to Somalia were severed during street fighting in January that ended Mr. Siad Barre's 21-year rule. Diplomatic sources say up to 20,000 people died in those battles.

Since then, Mr. Ali Mahdi's government has failed to extend its control beyond the capital, and Somalia's southern region remains riven by tribal feuds. Sources earlier Monday said fighting broke out Sunday between forces loyal to Mr. Ali Mahdi and those of Gen. Aideded, chairman of the ruling party.

By Monday, the fighting had moved from areas controlled by Gen. Aideded's supporters to areas traditionally controlled by Mr. Ali Mahdi's faction.

Crown Prince urges greater symmetry in cultural ties

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Monday that Jordan strongly advocates the establishment of greater symmetry in cultural relations among nations, and for this reason has embarked on inter-faith dialogues encompassing the three monotheistic religions.

The traditions which the three faiths embody will contribute to the emergence of a more human global order, said the Crown Prince in an address delivered on his behalf by economist Jawad Al Anani. Jordan, he said, believes in multi-lateralism as an essential step towards enhancing understanding among peoples and in fostering cooperation between the various regions of the globe, where symmetry in inter-regional exchange is an essential ingredient, said the Prince in his address.

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Sharon, citing cash crisis, says settlements threatened

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Housing Minister Ariel Sharon threatened Monday to freeze housing construction throughout Israel and the occupied territories unless the finance ministry gave him more money.

However, Mr. Sharon's left-wing critics doubted he would carry out the threat, since it would amount to freezing his own pet project — the construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Amir Goldblum of the Peace Now movement, which opposes the construction drive in the occupied territories, said he did not believe Mr. Sharon "would stop for a minute, at least anything on the other side of the green line."

The green line separates pre-1967 Israel from the territories it occupied in the 1967 war.

Mr. Goldblum said Mr. Sharon's declaration was a ploy to mobilise right-wing support for settlement construction, and part of a long-running feud with Finance Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

Mr. Mordechai is under pressure to increase spending on various domestic fronts, including the military, and insists Israel cannot afford to pay for Mr. Sharon's ambitious construction plans.

Mr. Sharon maintains that he has to build thousands of housing units for Jewish immigrants, as well as more settlements to reinforce Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In issuing his threat to freeze construction, Mr. Sharon accused Mr. Mordechai of trying to appease the Americans, who regard settlements on occupied territory as an obstacle to peace.

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Boy killed in W. Bank clash with informers

AZZOUN, Occupied West Bank (R) — A Palestinian boy was shot dead Monday when residents of an occupied West Bank village clashed with suspected Israeli informers, Palestinians said.

The army said 12 people were taken to hospital from Azoun, a West Bank village of 7,000 Palestinians, but hospital sources said 18 were hurt, two of them seriously.

Israeli soldiers declared Azoun a closed military area. Residents said the clash erupted after members of a local family, accused by Palestinians of working as informers for Israeli security forces, went on a rampage to avenge an attack by local activists.

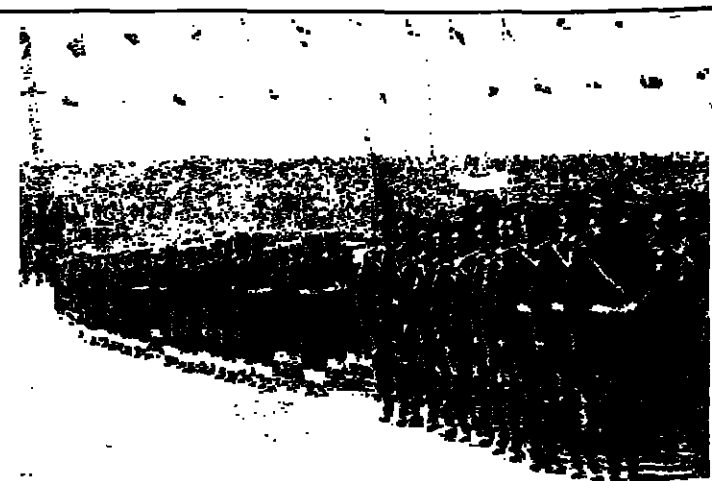
Palestinians said Mohammad Ahmad Sukkar, 15, died instantly in the shooting spree and others were wounded. Troops trying to impose a curfew shot and wounded other villagers, they said.

The army said its troops fired only tear-gas. Activists have been waging a war against hundreds of those

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BIRTHDAY FESTIVAL: The Public Security Department (PSD) Monday held a festival marking the Nov. 14 birthday of His Majesty King Hussein. Their Majesties the King and Queen Noor attended the ceremony at Marka airport. The festival included parades by mounted police, brassbands and military and sports performance. Also displayed were PSD military vehicles and



equipment. Attending the festival were also His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad and a number of royal family members along with Prime Minister Taher Masi, the speakers and members of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament as well as senior officials and high-ranking army officers. Photos by Yusef Al 'Alian

Palestinian delegate says Israel trying to sow doubts

AMMAN (R) — Israel is trying to sow doubts among the Palestinian people over Middle East peace talks, a Palestinian delegate to the conference said Monday.

Saeed Erekat, the outspoken West Bank lecturer who infuriated Israel by pledging his allegiance to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), said reports in Israeli media that he had quit the delegation were proof of Israel's efforts to drive a wedge between the people.

"I think it is all set-up stories to create confusion among our people and I think the Israeli people have been playing with this population," he told Reuters, denying reports as recent as Monday that he and other delegates had resigned.

Mr. Erekat, who addressed an Amman rally Sunday along with advisers to the Palestinian negotiating committee, said the team may be enlarged to add technical and other experts.

He said senior adviser Faisal Al Hussein and three other delegation members had crossed over in Jordan from the West Bank on Sunday and planned to return Wednesday.

The team has met outgoing Prime Minister Taher Masi and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber and was expected to see King Hussein to discuss the historic peace talks with Israel due to reconvene this month.

A PLO delegation including Mahmoud Abbas, head of the International Relations Department, was expected to arrive in Amman from Tunis later Monday for talks on the peace process.

Mr. Erekat said Hanan Ashrawi, the spokeswoman for the peace talks delegation originally scheduled to come to Amman on Sunday, had stayed in the West Bank to conduct other business and not because of a furor over alleged meetings with the PLO.

Israeli police were reported to have recommended last week that Dr. Ashrawi should stand trial on charges of meeting members of the PLO.

Mr. Erekat himself sparked threats that Israel might walk out of the peace talks after he publicly declared that the PLO had chosen the delegates.

The Jewish state bans contact with the PLO and has barred anyone with clear links to the organisation participating in the peace talks that opened in Madrid last month.

Syrian team arrives today for trilateral talks on negotiations

Five new members join bilateral talks delegation

By Ghadeer Taher
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A five-member Syrian delegation arrives in Amman Tuesday for trilateral consultations to coordinate moves with Jordanian and Palestinian delegates ahead of the next round of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks launched at the Oct. 30 Middle East peace conference in Madrid.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber said the team, headed by Zakaria Ismail, will meet Tuesday with Jordanian officials and the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks.

Mr. Ismail, a former ambassador and an expert on international law, is the deputy head of the Syrian negotiating team.

Dr. Abu Jaber said the trilateral meeting of Jordanian, Syrian and Palestinian delegates would be held Wednesday to discuss "strategy and priorities for the next phase of Arab-Israeli negotiations."

"The visit by the Syrian delegation is an excellent development for inter-Arab coordination,"

said Dr. Abu Jaber, who headed the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the opening of the peace conference in Madrid.

"This is an opportunity for the Jordanian, Palestinian and Syrian delegates to get to know each other, plan strategy and set priorities for the next phase of talks," the minister said.

Dr. Abu Jaber said his Syrian counterpart Farouk Al Sharaa was expected in Amman within the next several days, but no specific date has yet been set.

A five-member Palestinian team of peace negotiators and advisers is currently in Amman for consultations with Jordanian officials and delegates.

"We are coordinating in depth on two levels with the Jordanian team — the bilaterals and multilaterals," Palestinian delegate Saeed Erekat said Monday. "We need strong coordination to reach common ground not only with the Jordanians but with the Syrians, Saudis ... and the other Arab parties."

At an open debate held in Amman Sunday, the Palestinian

delegates deplored what they said was the lack of Arab coordination prior to the peace conference and said the Arab position in talks with Israel was weakened because of it.

Jordan and Syria have been moving towards increased coordination ahead of bilateral talks after Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Abdul Karim Kabariti held talks with Syrian Prime Minister Mahmoud al Zoubi and Foreign Minister Sharaa. Mr. Kabariti delivered a message from Prime Minister Taher Masi to Mr. Zoubi on the need to coordinate negotiating strategies.

Jordan and Syria have agreed to work together towards drawing up "a working plan" to be adopted by all Arab parties to the peace negotiations in a bid to circumvent "Israeli attempts to undermine the peace process," said Mr. Kabariti, who returned from Damascus Sunday.

Wednesday's trilateral meeting is expected to try to formulate a common position on the venue

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Libyan justice ministry to study British extradition request

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Libya's foreign ministry has passed to the justice ministry a British extradition request for two Libyans charged with bombing a Pan Am plane over Scotland in 1988, the official Libyan news agency (JANA) said Monday.

The agency confirmed the foreign ministry had received the request from the Italian ambassador, who represents British interests in Libya, but it gave no indication of how the Libyan authorities would respond.

The foreign ministry "after examining these documents, which are clearly of a judicial nature and deal with the crash of a civilian aircraft ... referred this request to the People's Committee (ministry) for justice," it said.

The two men, Libyans Abdul Baset Ali Mohamed Al Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah, have been charged with planting explosives aboard Pan Am Flight 103, which blew up over the town of Lockerbie in December 1988, killing 270 people.

Mr. Megrahi, 39, chief of the Libyan intelligence agency's airline security section, and Mr. Fhimah, 35, an intelligence agent who worked for Libyan Arab

Airlines in Malta, are believed to be in Libya.

Libya has denied any role in the explosion and Libyan officials have indicated they will not hand the two men over.

JANA said Sunday the British accusations and similar ones by the United States were designed to terrorise the Libyan people and divert attention from Western economic problems.

Neither British nor the United States have extradition treaties with Libya. Libya and Britain have not had diplomatic relations since 1984, when a British policewoman was shot outside the Libyan embassy in London.

The United States has called for concerted international action to make Libya comply with the extradition request.

U.S. Ambassador to Britain Raymond Seitz declined to say on Sunday whether Washington was considering using military force.

"There is no deadline but we're not going to dawdle either," he told British television.

JANA said the justice ministry would evaluate the extradition request on the basis of Libyan law.

The French foreign ministry

summoned Libya's ambassador to emphasise France's intent to pursue "to the end" judicial proceedings arising from the alleged Libyan role in two airplane bombings, a French spokesman said Monday.

The envoy, Saad Mujafer, was summoned Sunday for a lengthy meeting with the ministry's secretary-general, Francois Scheer, and a brief session afterwards with Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, according to Mr. Dumas' spokesman, Daniel Bernard.

Mr. Bernard said the French officials "stressed in the clearest way France's desire to see the judicial proceedings in course concerning the attacks on the UTA DC-10 and the Pan Am Boeing at Lockerbie pursued to the end."

Mr. Mujafer reportedly travelled to Libya after the meetings to report to his superiors.

French Judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere on Oct. 30 charged three Libyans — including the brother-in-law of Colonel Qaddafi — with conspiring to carry out the bombing of the UTA plane over Niger on Sept. 19, 1989. All 170 people were killed.

Iraq list blocked Food, medicine deals

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq made public a shopping list for almost \$2 billion worth of food Monday, stepping up its campaign against economic sanctions on the eve of a visit by a top U.N. relief official.

The official, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, arrives in Baghdad Tuesday for a three-day visit during which he will try to persuade Iraq to accept U.N. Resolution 706 allowing it to sell oil to buy food but under strict U.N. supervision.

The prince also wants to extend the mandate on U.N. relief agencies who have after abortive post-Gulf war rebellions by Kurds and Shiites. The mandate expires at the end of 1991.

"The Iraqi nation have faced the most uncivilised aggression by the 30-nation (U.S.-led) allies and faces the most disgusting plot in modern history aimed at their lives," Iraq's Defence Ministry daily Al Qadissiya said.

Its editorial was the most militant note yet struck in crescendo of defiance in the countdown to Prince Sadruddin's visit.

The shopping list was given to journalists by the trade ministry to show that Iraq had tried to buy food, which is in short supply because of the U.N. trade blockade.

The ministry accused Western governments of blocking its purchases by refusing to unfreeze Iraq's \$4 billion of foreign assets.

It showed orders had been placed for \$1.93 billion of flour, rice, pulses, milk, cheese and other products which are allowed to import freely without the permission of a U.N. committee enforcing sanctions imposed after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The orders were placed with food giants such as the Swiss Nestle concern, and the New Zealand dairy board against

funds held in a variety of banks including the Chase Manhattan of the United States, Midland and Barclays of Britain and Societe Generale of France.

The U.N. mandate expires at the end of the year but U.N. and Iraqi officials say Baghdad is reluctant to extend it as long as it is under pressure to accept Resolution 706 which would allow it to sell \$1.6 billion of crude oil.

Baghdad says that after deduction of war reparations, payment for U.N. staff and other administrative costs, it would have little more than \$900 of its own money.

It says it would prefer to barter oil for food supplies as those on the trade ministry list which are for subsidised rations sold at a fraction of prices on the rampant free market.

Qadissiya accused Washington of using Resolution 706 to achieve what it could not achieve in the Gulf war.

"This suspicious resolution is trying to drive a wedge between the Iraqi people and its leadership represented by the symbol of its leader Saddam Hussein," it said.

The resolution would "control its oil wealth and steal its hard currency revenues," it added.

Washington, it said, wanted to "divide Iraq's nation and geographical unity and impose political trusteeship upon it."

Iraq says drug shortages caused by the sanctions are killing thousands of people. The government says it has placed orders for \$40 million worth of medicine with British firms alone which have not been met because its assets are frozen.

The blockade has cut Iraq's trade links with the rest of the world apart from food items which it can, in theory, import without U.N. permission.

Hersh rejects hoaxer report over Maxwell

LONDON (AP) — Author Seymour Hersh said Sunday his book about Israel's nuclear arms programme was already published when he had contact with a hoaxer reportedly claiming, to have fooled him, the dogmatic news agency Press Association reported.

The Sunday Times said a hoaxer misled Mr. Hersh with information about the late publisher Robert Maxwell's alleged involvement with Israel in the case of Mordechai Vanunu.

Mr. Hersh's book, the "Samson Option," says Mr. Maxwell was close to Israel's top leadership and took part in a campaign to discredit Mr. Vanunu, an Israeli technician who revealed Israeli nuclear secrets to the Sunday Times in 1986.

It also says Nicholas Davies, then foreign editor of Mr. Maxwell's Daily Mirror, was instrumental in betraying Mr. Vanunu to Israeli agents.

Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Davies denied the allegations and fled libel suits against Mr. Hersh and his publisher Faber and Faber, who countersued.

On Nov. 12, Faber and Faber Chairman Matthew Evans held a news conference. He read a statement from Mr. Hersh about evidence reportedly from a detective who said Mr. Davies had conspired with him about wiretapping a Sunday Times reporter working on the Vanunu story.

The same day, a British law-maker, Rupert Allason, said he had been told that Mr. Hersh had evidence of a telephone call made to Mr. Maxwell from the Geneva hotel where Mr. Davies purportedly met with the detective.

The Sunday Times and two other Sunday newspapers reported this week that the purported detective was a known hoaxer named Joe Flynn. The Sunday Times quoted Flynn as saying it was all a ruse.

"I am a comedian," Flynn was reported to have said.

According to Press Association, Mr. Hersh said Flynn "initiated contact on Oct. 28, 1991, eight days after publication of the 'Samson Option'." I had no previous contact with him and he was not a source for anything in the book."

Mr. Hersh also was quoted as saying he never wrote or asserted Mr. Maxwell was involved with Israeli intelligence or "played a role in leading the Israeli government to Mordechai Vanunu."

Mr. Hersh also denied statements attributed to him in the Sunday Times article this weekend, Press Association said. The agency did not say whether Mr. Hersh specified which statements he was referring to.

Mr. Maxwell, 68, died Nov. 5 while cruising in his yacht in the Canary Islands. His body was found in the ocean hours after he was reported missing from his cabin. Final results of an autopsy have not yet been revealed.

Reuter adds: The widow of Mr. Maxwell, found floating in the sea nearly two weeks ago, said Sunday it was possible her husband had simply slipped off his yacht while it was cruising near the Canary Islands.

"I think it is very, very possible that he slipped," Elisabeth Maxwell said in a live interview with a private French television station.

She said she had been on the yacht, the Lady Ghislaine, in calm seas and the vessel had still rolled. "Falling off that yacht was not impossible."

Mubarak to discuss Libya charges in Europe

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak left Monday for a European tour during which he is expected to raise Western charges that Libyan intelligence agents blew a Pan Am airliner out of the sky over Scotland in 1988.

Mr. Mubarak, who has formed a close relationship with Libya's Muammar Qadhafi in the past two years, was originally expected to concentrate on Egypt's economic reform plan, foreign debt rescheduling and the Middle East peace process.

But Mr. Mubarak aides said the allegations against Libya would now figure on the agenda.

"Of course the dispute with Libya will arise several times during President Mubarak's talks," an official accompanying the Egyptian leader told Reuters before he left for Rome.

Mr. Mubarak's tour was arranged before the charges against Libya emerged last week but diplomats said the issue was expected to come up during his talks in both Paris and Rome.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid said in remarks published in Al Akhbar newspaper that the league was in touch with several parties to try to "contain the crisis between Libya and some Western states."

"Any external threats to a member state are rejected," Dr. Abdul Meguid, an Egyptian, added.

Egypt, Washington's strongest Arab ally, has not officially commented on the charges but has asked to study evidence of Libya's alleged involvement in bomb blast which killed all 259 people on the Pan Am plane and 11 people on the ground.

A Western diplomat in Cairo said Washington and London had strong evidence implicating two Libyan intelligence agents but added: "I do not think the United States and its Western allies will strike Libya now."

Libya has denied the charges. U.S. President George Bush has said he would consult other world leaders on possible retaliation.

Egypt, which fought a brief border war with Libya in 1977, turned down a request by Washington in 1986 either to join a military strike against Libya or provide facilities for U.S. planes which carried out the operation.

Egyptian ties with Libya started improving in October 1989 when Col. Qadhafi, the harsh critic of Cairo's 1979 peace treaty with Israel, visited Egypt.

Col. Qadhafi and Mr. Mubarak have visited each other's countries several times and the number of Egyptians now working and living in Libya has grown to more than a million.

Diplomats said Cairo insisted in 1989 that "containing" Palestinian radical leader Abu Nidal, born Sabri Bana, was a prerequisite for improving ties with Libya.

Abu Nidal, one of the world's most feared and wanted men in the eyes of Washington, was later reported to have been put under house arrest in a Libyan hospital and then deported to Iraq.

Paris-based Radio Monte Carlo said Friday Egypt had made an urgent appeal to the United States not to take military action against Libya. A state-owned Cairo daily, Al Gmhouriya, called on Mr. Bush Sunday not to use force against Libya.

Mr. Mubarak will also visit Pope John Paul in the Vatican and address the European Parliament.

'March of one million' clogs Damascus streets

DAMASCUS (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of Syrians waving pictures of President Hafez Al Assad and chanting his name marched Monday through the streets of Damascus in a massive show of support.

The rally, dubbed "the March of the One Million," brought traffic to a standstill on several main thoroughfares in this city of four million.

The demonstration came a day after the parliament voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Assad for a fourth, seven-year term in office.

Mr. Assad, 61 seized power in a bloodless coup on Nov. 16, 1970. He officially became president in March 1971.

Under the Syrian constitution, the vote of the parliament, or people's council, must be endorsed in a public referendum. The vote has been scheduled for Dec. 2.

The rally also comes as Syria and other Arab states have begun talks with Israel under U.S. and Soviet sponsorship. The conference currently is in recess after its Oct. 30 opening in Madrid, Spain.

The marchers carried banners, flags, flowers and posters picturing Mr. Assad looking somber or smiling. The mood was festive, with teenage girls waving pom-poms and children scampering among the marchers.

"Yes to the hero of peace," one banner said. "Here's to the one who built modern Syria," said another.

Thousands shouted a chant over and over: "Hafez Assad, symbol of Arab revolution."

Some of the marchers were men in business suits, others were in headresses, still others wore the baggy pants of peasants. Women in short skirts and fluffy sweaters marched alongside overcoats of observant Muslims.

The march culminated in a rally at the Omayyad traffic circle in front of the Hafez Assad National Library. Political speeches were broadcast live on the state-controlled television and radio.

Marwan Sheikoun, a member of parliament, told the cheering crowd that at least one million had come.

Abdullah Al Ahmar, assistant secretary-general of the ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party, told the rally that Mr. Assad "was the leader for whom our people and nation waited for a long time."

"His presence was necessary for our struggle and for marching towards unity, liberty and socialism," Mr. Al Ahmar said.

He said the Baath Party leadership's decision to nominate Mr. Assad for a fourth term in office "was in response to the will of our people" and was reflected in the



Hafez Al Assad

huge turnout for the rally. Shops and government offices were closed to allow employees to participate in the demonstration.

Newspapers were full of stories and editorials in praise of Mr. Assad.

The Al Baath daily, published by ruling party, carried a red banner headline reading "Yes to the symbol of our nation and the leader of our march."

The government-run Tishrin called on the public to "merge with their leader."

It added: "There is no leader like President Assad to restore Arab rights and to make the world face its responsibilities in implementing the U.N. Resolutions."

Crown Prince urges symmetry

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economic uncertainty and meager resources.

In addition to the direct financial losses to its economy due to the Gulf crisis, Jordan has to pay the costs of the influx in terms of education, health, housing, municipal and public services, and new job opportunities.

Heavy investment is needed in all of these areas.

The total financial resources required to barely safeguard the current standard of living are estimated at \$4.5 billion. I would ask you to compare this figure with Israel's current estimates for the influx of approximately 345,000 Soviet Jews: \$10 billion in housing loan guarantees alone. To put these figures on a human scale: Israel has used a criteria of about \$30,000 per head, just for housing, food, guarantees. By applying the same criteria to the case of Jordan, comparable funds needed would reach \$9 billion.

The Club of Rome discourse has been a humane one, throughout which global problems have been considered through focus on the human person. It is against this background that I call on you to recognise the human dimensions of the exodus of migrants which Jordan is shouldering.

The past days have witnessed a momentous event. Arabs and Israelis have met face to face in Madrid to engage in an attempt to achieve that elusive and noble goal, a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The road to resolution promises to be long and difficult, for the conflict is a tragedy that has taken a massive human toll. The major victims of the Middle East conflict have been civilians: the elderly, women and children. I would like this opportunity to add my voice to that of President Bush, who made an eloquent plea at the Madrid conference for the children of the Middle East. I pray that we are indeed witnessing a watershed in our history, the start of an age when children in our area will carry no longer the burdens of the scourge of war.

There are instances in the history of nations when momentous and difficult choices must be made. Israel is presently at such a crossroads. It may either continue illegally to occupy Arab lands, continue to deny the Palestinians their right to a dignified existence on their ancestral soil, and thus continue to live in the dark shadows of conflict and siege mentality for generations to come. It may alternatively choose the challenge of progress, opting for peace and coexistence with its Arab neighbours, which is ultimately the only path that can guarantee its security. The Arabs and the international community at large have agreed together on the need to solve this dispute in the context of an opportunity which may

never arise again. The world awaits a positive Israeli response: the engagement in and commitment to peace without which all aspects of the conflict must remain irresolvable.

I took notice of an item in the Club of Rome "Declaration of Responsibility" pertaining to the need to maintain groups, cultures or societies.

It has been dismaying to identify a tendency among some thinkers to the proposition that the wars of the future will be cultural wars, and that the threat to the more developed nations will come from the south, and in particular, from Islamic countries. This idea is rooted in an assessment of Arab and Muslim culture that presents it as a threatening, implacably hostile monolith. This ignores the diversity, the plurality and the areas of commonality that bind East with West. The Holy Quran says: "O mankind, we have created you male and female and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable among you in the sight of God is the most righteous. God is all-knowing, all-aware." (49/13).

The possibility of fruitful cross cultural exchange and enrichment between multiple cultural systems may be limited by the political and economic monopoly of the West in this increasingly unipolar world. I am sure that Latin Americans share the same concern.

An examination of the "security dilemma" a concept of recent political science, may prove useful in this context. It relates to a situation in which two or more states are locked in an arms race with the motive of enhancing their security. With each step up in the arming process, the other state responds with a higher threshold of commitments, ensuring

continuous incremental escalation. Thus, the pursuit of security paradoxically leads only to greater insecurity. I would like to relate this model to cultural relations. As members of one cultural group resort to a rigid fundamentalism with a confrontational and reductionist view of other cultures, animosity, acrimony and even conflict may result. Such a result, as with the "security dilemma" model, gives rise only to isolation, and not to the real development and cultural growth that each society seeks and requires. Having said that, the right of each and every society to affirm a cultural identity must be upheld. I applaud Latin American thinkers who have made singular contributions in elaborating communications and cultural dependency models related to paradigms describing the processes of economic dependency.

I have called for a "new order of understanding of the Arab Muslim World." Such an order demands new agendas for the next century: global warming, the loss of species, deforestation, and the question of water scarcity in a planet soon to be the home of ten billion people.

Equally, such an order must involve a more humanised approach in the way journalists cover events in a part of the globe where the local cultural milieu differs from the prevailing culture.

We in Jordan believe strongly in the need to establish greater symmetry in cultural relations. We have accordingly been engaged in inter-faith dialogues encompassing the Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions. We believe that the values and moral substance that these religious embody will contribute to the emergence of a more humane global order.

Waite, Suntherland released

(Continued from page 1)

napped by Israelis in 1989, in exchange for its missing servicemen.

At U.N. headquarters, Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar said Monday that Giamdemonico Pico, his personal envoy in Beirut, confirmed the release of the two hostages.

The U.N. chief confirmed the releases through his spokeswoman, Nadia Younes, after he conferred by telephone with Mr. Pico.

Earlier, Mr. Perez de Cuellar confirmed that he has been offered the release of all hostages by Christmas.

"That is what I have been offered by the groups, as well as by the Iranian government, which has always given me very strong support, as well as the Syrian

government," he said in answer to a reporter's question.

The release of Mr. Waite and Mr. Suntherland leaves three Americans, two Germans and an Italian known to be missing in Lebanon.

The original announcement of the release came in a statement delivered by Islamic Jihad to a Western news agency in Beirut.

His brother-in-law, David Murray, told reporters in Iowa that Mr. Suntherland's wife, Jean, had called to say "that she had some confirmation and she was going to be speaking with the State Department."

Jean Suntherland, who has lived in Beirut since his abduction, left the Lebanese capital for the United States on Sunday to attend the funeral of her 80-year-old father. He died Saturday.

Turkish coalition talks stumble over cabinet list

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's Prime Minister-designate Suleyman Demirel delayed plans to submit a cabinet list to President Turgut Ozal Monday after a wrangle with his coalition partner over government seats.

Mr. Demirel, leader of the True Path Party (DYP), and Social Democrat Populist Party (SHP) chief Erdal Inonu both said they hoped to find a compromise soon.

They agreed last week on plans for democratic and human rights reforms and other social, economic and security policies.

But talks hit a snag on Sunday over how to distribute 32 cabinet posts between the two parties. Mr. Demirel cancelled a Monday appointment with Mr. Ozal, who must approve the cabinet list.

"We could not reach an agreement on the construction of the government," DYP Secretary-General Gokberk Ergenekon said.

"We are trying to reach a compromise. I believe there is a high possibility of one being found," Mr. Demirel told Anatolian news agency last Sunday.

Oct. 20 parliamentary elections ended eight years of Motherland Party rule.

The DYP won 178 seats in the 450-member assembly, Motherland 115 and the SHP 88. Sixty-two seats went to ultra-rightwing and fundamentalist parties, which have since dissolved their

electoral alliance, and seven to the Democratic Left party.

"We need more time to think and discuss. I hope an agreement will be reached soon," Mr. Inonu told reporters Monday.

Newspapers said the SHP was holding out for 14 cabinet seats and wanted the economy and education portfolios.

"This is not going to be a coalition between a bigger and a smaller party. This will be a government in which partners will carry equal responsibility," Mr. Inonu said. "It cannot take long because the formation of a government cannot wait."

If Mr. Demirel fails to win an accord with the SHP, he may seek a new election rather than aligning with Motherland or the fundamentalist Welfare Party, an influential columnist said.

"After the snag in the talks, the DYP has decided to go for early elections if Demirel runs out of coalition options," Ertugrul Ozkok wrote in the mass-circulation Harriyet daily.

Outgoing Prime Minister and Motherland Party leader Mesut Yilmaz said Monday he would welcome another election if Mr. Demirel could not put together a coalition government.

The constitution empowers Mr. Ozal to call new polls if a government cannot be formed within 45 days of the first session of the new parliament.

Syrian team arrives today

(Continued from page 1)

and date for the bilateral Arab-Israeli talks and on the timing for multilateral talks with Israel.

Moves for closer coordination between the three parties came after Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) announced last week that they had healed an eight-year rift.

Jordan has said it will attend the multilateral talks, scheduled for December, but it said it will not sign any final agreement with Israel without tangible progress on the Palestinian problem.

The Palestinian side is reportedly closer to the Syrian position, which insists on progress to be achieved on the bilateral front before entering multilateral talks.

There are some differences among the parties towards the third stage of the negotiations and we are discussing this in detail," said Mr. Erekat without elaboration.

The Jordanian team Monday met to "assign responsibilities" to individual members and to finalise changes in the composition of the delegation, informed sources said.

Although the sources said last minute changes were still possible in the delegation's make-up, they said five new members have been introduced to replace delegates who attended in the Madrid conference. They said at least two seats remained vacant.

The new delegates include former Supply Minister and Economic Advisor at the Prime Ministry Fayez Tarawneh, Marwan Muasher, the official spokesman for the delegation in Madrid, water specialist Munther Haddadin, former head of the Department for Palestinian Affairs Ahmad Qatanani and Badri Al Mulki, former head of the Department of Land and Surveys.

The sources said Jordan's ambassadors to Moscow and London, Mohammad Al Adwan and Fawad Ayyoub respectively, as well as Mohammad Bani Hamid, secretary-general of the Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs and the Environment, have been replaced.

The names of the other two delegates that would be replaced according to this change could not be obtained by the Jordan Times.

Sharon says settlements threatened

(Continued from page 1)

according to the desires of the Americans, something which is diametrically opposed to the position of the government," Mr. Sharon said on army radio Monday.

Some Palestinian leaders are threatening to discontinue the peace talks that began three weeks ago in Madrid unless settlement construction was halted.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has refused to halt settlement construction, saying the issue should be left for negotiations.

Finance ministry spokesman Eli Yoseph said his ministry had transferred 500 million shekels (\$208 million) to the housing ministry Sunday as part of the 1991 budget.

"I don't know what he wants," Mr. Yoseph said of Mr. Sharon. Mr. Yoseph said the funds were for written contracts only and not for paying off verbal agreements between the housing ministry and building contractors.

Mr. Sharon told the Maariv newspaper that contractors would not be paid.

"There is no choice but to cease construction activity ... in all its stages, immediately upon the return of the prime minister to the country if a solution is not found," Mr. Sharon said.

Mr. Shamir is on a 10-day visit to the United States, and Mr. Sharon's statements appeared to be an attempt to force the prime minister into coming down on his side in the dispute.

The dimensions of the Sharon-Modai feud became clear in September when Mr. Sharon was speaking of building at least 16,000 housing units in the occupied territories, and Mr. Modai said his budget envisaged 3,000 at most.

At the time, Mr. Modai claimed Mr. Sharon's extensive construction drive would needlessly arouse U.S. anger.

A housing ministry statement said Mr. Sharon's threatened freeze would affect 75,350 homes under construction in the occupied West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights, as well as the Arab and Jewish sectors of Jerusalem, and the Nagab Desert and Galilee.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77511-19

PROGRAMME TWO
12:00 Bontli
12:05 Canscience
12:30 Suzanne Canche
12:35 News in French
12:40 French varieties
12:45 News in Hebrew
12:50 News in Arabic
21:30 Who's the Boss
21:35 Our House
22:00 News in English
22:20 Columbo

FAVOUR TIMES

06:35 Fajr
07:54 (Sunrise) Dala
11:10 Dhimir
14:10 'Aar
16:45 Maghreb
18:04 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedisch, Tel. 870740
Anglican Church of God Church, Tel. 627865
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Sante Church Tel. 661737

Terramata Church Tel: 62366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 62383, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Assiout International Church Tel. 68326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 62364, 65932

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Ballon supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain, particularly in the northern parts of the country. A drop in temperature is expected and winds will be southerly moderate to fresh.

In Agila, it will be partly cloudy and sunny, and winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.
Min./max. temp.
Amman 8 / 19
Agila 13 / 25
Dharrat 5 / 20
Jordan Valley 15 / 25

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

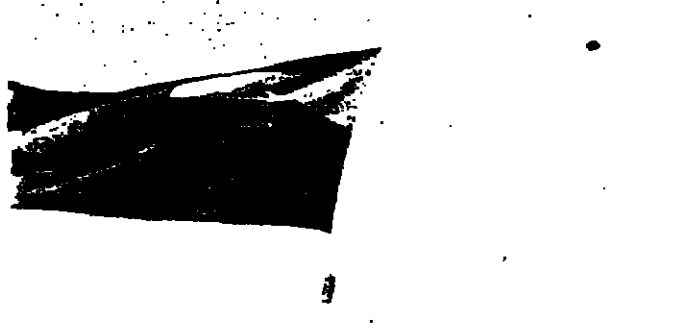
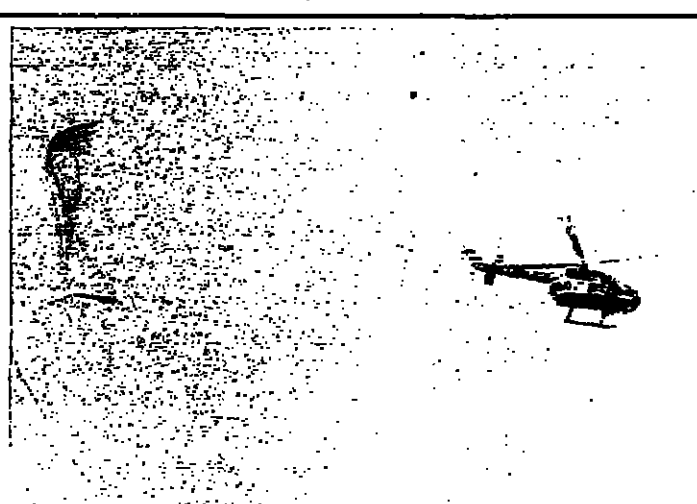
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 22,



HELIPORT INAUGURATION

His Majesty King Hussein Monday inaugurated the heliport services headquarters of the Public Security Department (PSD) at Marjeh and the adjacent heliport. The PSD possesses three helicopters, a gift from Germany to help in police work. The helicopters operating in the country help Jordan combat drug trafficking operations and prevent smuggling

across its border with neighbouring countries. Present at the ceremony with the King were His Royal Highnesses Princes Abdullah and Faisal, Prime Minister Taher Masi, Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker, Army Chief of Staff Marshal Fathi Abu Talch and other officials in addition to German ambassador to Jordan Heinrich Reimers and a visiting German team.



HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Petra exhibition opens

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Highness Princess Wijdan Ali, chairperson of the Royal Society of Fine Arts, Monday opened at the French Cultural Centre a photography exhibition entitled, "Petra in Natural Abstraction" by students at the National Gallery of Fine Arts. The two-week exhibition included 68 coloured photos depicting the beauty of the Nabatean city of Petra. The opening ceremony was attended by the French ambassador in Amman, Denis Bouchard, and the French cultural attaché.

Plight of children discussed

CAIRO (Petra) — Jordan, along with Arab, Asian and African countries, took part in a seminar on "Taking Care of Children in Rural Areas" which concluded in Cairo Sunday. Jordan's delegation to the seminar comprised Deputy Secretary General of the Social Development Ministry Abdul Rahim Salam and Director of the Social Development in Madaba District Adel Hijazeen, who presented a paper on the services of special education in Jordan. The paper dealt with classifying disabilities among the handicapped, disability causes, ways of protection from them and the legal situation of the handicapped in the Kingdom. The seminar stressed in its recommendations the need to exchange expertise among member states of the Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation, which organised the seminar in the field of child care.

Bank provides 53 loans

AMMAN (Petra) — The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) has extended 53 loans worth JD 317,400 to finance several projects in various parts of the country. Seventeen loans worth

JD 120,500 were extended to finance equipping medical clinics and laboratories, 13 loans worth JD 68,900 for the establishment of tricot and knit-wear factories, five worth JD 34,300 to establish restaurants and bakeries, and the rest of the loans were granted to other industrial and services projects.

Problems in food production discussed

AMMAN (Petra) — Participants in a three-day seminar on the "Role of Cooperatives in Ensuring Food Security in the Arab World" Monday discussed several working papers on marketing food products, the role of marketing in developing and increasing production of cooperatives and other papers dealing with the problems of marketing in the Arab World and introducing solutions to them. The seminar, which was opened Sunday, is organised by the Jordan Cooperative Organisation in cooperation with the Arab Federation for Food Industries.

NAF provides JD 4,455,058

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Aid Fund (NAF) extended during the past 10 months JD 4,455,058 to needy families in the Kingdom, according to an NAF source. The sources said JD 3,293,026 were extended as recurrent aid to 16,014 needy families, 1,985 cases of which started to get aid from NAF only this year. Of the total amount, JD1,080,216 were extended to 740 cases to help them start their own income-generating projects, the sources said. According to the source, JD 814,144 were extended to the needy in Amman, JD 199,793 in Irbid, JD 330,690 in Mafrag, JD 379,000 in Karak, JD 243,711 in Tafleh, JD 441,058 in Maan Governorate, JD 207,352 in Zarqa Governorate, JD 261,915 in Al Koura District and JD 236,543 in Al Balqa Governorate.

contract NRA signs geology project

AMMAN (J.T.) — The French Department of Research in Minerals and Geology Monday signed an agreement with the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) under which the former will implement the NRA's economic geology project.

The project will be financed with one million European currency units (ECU) to be provided as a grant from the European Community (EC). The economic geology project will investigate the best means to exploit the economic potential of Jordan's non-oil

mineral resources. The project will cover three areas of commercial interest: — Quarry management and marketing of ornamental stones, — Copper mining prospects in the Wadi Araba area, and — Geochemical prospecting of the Agaba/Araba complex (south-east Jordan) for sulphide metals, rare earths elements and precious metals.

EC funds will provide the project with European assistance in management, marketing, mining, minerals economics, prospecting, economic geology and geochemistry. The technical assistance team will help in the transfer of know-how and initiating the development of mineral deposits.

Australian college to promote exchanges with Jordanian universities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Victoria College of Australia is launching an initiative to cooperate with Jordanian universities for exchanges of students, academic plans and material and other resources. Professor William Logan, dean of the college's Faculty of Arts, will be visiting Jordan in next month to hold talks with officials at the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University.

A letter from a Victoria College said that during the visit between Dec. 14 and Dec. 22, Professor Logan will have detailed discussions on bilateral cooperation with Jordanian officials. It is hoped that through such educational and cultural contacts, a better understanding and closer ties between Victoria College, which will become a full-fledged university in January 1992, and the two Jordanian uni-

versities will emerge, the letter said. The letter noted that the Faculty of Arts at Victoria College will be offering two travelling scholarships for two students from the double degree course in business and Arabic. The two students, it said, would do an intensive short course in Arabic at the Language Centre at Yarmouk University between Dec. 14 and Jan. 23.

The letter announced that Victoria College would establish a centre for Arabic and Middle East studies at its Faculty of Arts in order to enhance the standing of the Faculty of Arts, to provide a structure which identifies and coordinates available resources within the college, to conduct short courses for external client groups and to encourage and promote staff and student exchanges.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "Graphic Arts of the 60s" (from the Federal Republic of Germany) at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation gallery (open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Goethe Forest" at Yarmouk University.
- ★ Art exhibition by Ihsan Al Turk and Abham Al Turk at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of children's paintings commemorating the 3rd anniversary of the declaration of the state of Palestine at the Royal Cultural Centre.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture entitled "Text Architecture" by Dr. Abdul Ilah Abdine at the Goethe Institute — 7 p.m.

Military exemption option near expiration date

AMMAN (J.T.) — A government rule allowing expatriates to pay \$6,000 in lieu of doing national service ends this month unless the deadline is extended again. According to a source at the Finance Ministry Monday, many people have paid the \$6,000 amount this month. He could not provide the total amount.

The source said that expatriates from Kuwait have until the end of February 1992 to pay the amount. The ministry said that those who delay payment beyond Nov. 30 and still wish to be exempted from national service would be required to pay \$500 for each month after the Nov. 30 deadline.

The last deadline was extended once in September 1991. In September 1990, the government announced that expatriates can pay the \$6,000 amount instead of doing national service. One year later it was disclosed that JD 45 million in foreign exchange have been collected from expatriates wishing to avoid doing national service.

Normal exemptions from the two-year mandatory service are extended to the chronically ill and on the only son in the family. Every male, regardless of the period of absence from the country, has to serve the term before reaching the age of 37.

But according to the conscription law, expatriates can delay their national service as long as they produce evidence that they are studying or employed abroad.

Official discusses Jordanian experience with subsidies

By Foad Hussein
Petra

AMMAN — Jordan has a strategic storage of rice, sugar and powdered milk sufficient for at least four months and wheat enough for at least six months, Ministry of Supply Secretary General Radi Ibrahim said Monday.

The government plans to retain its subsidy on basic foodstuffs and fodder largely for the benefit of limited-income groups and will continue to distribute these commodities through food coupons for as long as possible, Mr. Ibrahim said.

He said the Ministry of Supply is also fixing the prices of 36 locally produced or imported products in addition to basic items.

Mr. Ibrahim said that the ministry allows the merchant to make a 15 per cent profit on the prices, as quoted on the invoice. But, he added that floating of prices has sometimes led to the flooding of the market of various types of products, resulting in prices decreasing.

The Ministry of Supply last year resorted to floating the prices of three items: powdered milk, canned broad beans and chick peas for a trial period and the result was a reduction in their prices, mainly due to competition and the presence of a large amount of these products on the market.

He said that the Ministry of Supply is now encouraged to do the same with other com-

modities. But, he added, the ministry remains watchful and should there appear an imbalance or the prices rise sharply, it reserves the right to interfere and protect consumers.

Mr. Ibrahim outlined subsidies for foodstuffs over the past five years concerning wheat, sugar, rice, milk and animal feed.

He said subsidy on wheat was increased from JD 5.8 million in 1986, JD 9.4 million in 1988, JD 41.6 million in 1989 to JD 44.4 million in 1990 but dropped to JD 30.8 million in 1991 due to a decline in world prices. 1987 figures were not available.

But, he added, consumption of wheat increased in 1991 to 600,000 tonnes, compared to 520,000 in 1990 and 400,000 in 1987.

The Ministry of Supply, which retains the sole right of importing sugar, made a profit of JD 5 million in 1987, dropping to JD 1 million the following year while the treasury had to pay JD 20 million in 1989 in subsidies in 1989 to keep prices at the same level and JD 16.8 million in 1990, Mr. Ibrahim said.

The decline in the subsidy to JD 16.8 million was due to the distribution of the commodity through food cards and coupons, although quantities of consumed sugar have increased, he said.

In 1991, subsidies on sugar dropped to JD 4.6 million, he added.

With regard to rice, he said that in 1987 the Ministry of Supply made a profit of JD 2.8 million, but had to pay subsidy of JD 8.8 million in 1989 and JD 7.2 million in 1990 and JD 6.8 in 1991.

The Ministry of Supply made a profit on the sale of powdered milk estimated at JD 179,000 in 1987, but had to pay subsidy estimated at JD 2.2 million in 1989, JD 3.6 million in 1990 and JD 3.7 million in 1991, Mr. Ibrahim noted.

As to fodder, he said, the ministry had a surplus of JD 182,000 in 1987, but had to pay subsidy on this commodity

of JD 3.2 million in 1988, JD 5.6 million in 1990 and JD 7 million this year.

In total, the ministry, which had a surplus of JD 8 million in 1987, had to subsidise these commodities by JD60 million in 1991.

According to Mr. Ibrahim, the food coupons helped the ministry to save JD 33 million that would have been otherwise spent on subsidising foodstuffs. The food coupons are distributed only to Jordanian citizens who can buy sugar, rice and powdered milk almost half of the market prices.

Referring to olive oil, which is in great demand in local market, Mr. Ibrahim said that because of the shortage of the product in Jordan, the Ministry of Supply has concluded a contract for the purchase of 1,000 tonnes of olive from Tunisia. The oil will be shipped by the end of this month and will arrive in Jordan in the first half of December to be sold through the military and civilian service consumer corporations.

According to Mr. Ibrahim, the price of the oil will be 20 per cent higher than present rates due to the rise in prices on world markets and the decline of production in Tunisia.

The Ministry of Supply estimate the current shortage of olive oil for this year to be 10,000 tonnes, a situation which justified the importance of the Tunisian oil, Mr. Ibrahim said.

With reference to meat, Mr. Ibrahim said that the ministry opened the door for the private sector to import live sheep in the last quarter of last year. Also, the government reduced the customs duty on imported sheep from JD 8 to JD2 so as to provide the largest amount of meat at reasonable prices.

At present, 80,000 heads of sheep are slaughtered monthly in Jordan to meet the needs of the Jordanian people, Mr. Ibrahim said. He said that to encourage local farmers increase their production, the government opened the door for exports and a total of 300,000 heads of sheep were exported to other countries in the first 10 months of 1991.

Sectarianism to be discussed by Arab Thought Forum

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Goethe Institute in Amman and the Amman-based Arab Thought Forum (ATF) will organise a symposium here next month entitled "Sectarianism, pan-Arabism and the Modern State in the Contemporary World: Scopes and Contrast." A statement Monday said that the two-day meeting, to be held at the Arab Thought Forum, will discuss working

papers on: 1. The advent of the spirit of sectarianism and ethnic nationalism, 2. Society, the state and the nation in the Arab Orient, 3. Ethnic co-existence and violence, and 4. Prospects for the creation of a state and a nation of multi-sect communities. Participants will hear lectures in English.

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Tickets are available at: — Al Hussein Sports City — Phoenix Cafeteria and Gallery, Gardens Street. — Zahrat Al Mada'en Mill — Jubilee Circle. — Abia and Antar Stores, Jabal Luweibdeh. — Safeway International. — Al Tawil Tours Agency, near Safeway. — Geneva Coffeshop. — Music Box / Al Sweifiyyeh, the Eighth Circle. — Al Shallal Restaurant, the Gardens Street. — Rana Pizza, opposite Al Ra'i Newspaper. — Rawan Wool, Gardens Street-Da'san Centre. — Jerusalem International Hotel. — Ismail Salon — at Al Hussein Sports City, tel. 666712

Jordan Times

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
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Too quick on the draw

EGYPT seems to be doing the right thing by undertaking efforts to abort any precipitous armed intervention against Libya for allegedly blowing a Pan American jet liner over Scotland in 1988 and killing 270 people. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is personally conducting contacts at the highest possible level, both with Washington and London as well as with Tripoli to defuse the situation that developed over pointing the finger at two Libyan suspects who, the U.S. and British governments claim, are behind the tragic incident. Both Washington and London have insinuated that armed intervention cannot be ruled out to apprehend the accused.

Coming as it does on the heels of the military actions against Iraq, during the Gulf war, to reverse the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, any Western action now against another Arab country may give cause for belief that Arab countries are being singled out by the U.S. and its allies for military interventions to correct one alleged wrong after another. This image of the West as being principally hostile to the Arab World would not only undermine the ongoing peace process in the Middle East, but also the new international order that has become the hallmark of the new era that swept the surface of the globe in the wake of the collapse of the communist order in the Soviet Union and East Europe.

The much acclaimed new international order calls for several mechanisms that would be set in motion whenever there is a threat in international peace and security. Such mechanisms need not only act independently and fairly, but must look to do so in order to achieve wider global recognition and acceptance. The worst that could be done now while this new order is being formed is to give the impression that some key capitals are just too fast on the draw against certain Arab capitals when there are so many other countries that can also serve as appropriate venues for action-oriented measures to remedy not only a presumption of wrong-doing, but also a violation that has been well documented and judged as such by the United Nations.

In the case of the bombed Pan American Boeing, an international tribunal, emanating from the international organisation to investigate the file on it and gather data from various sources with a view to submitting its findings to the appropriate organ of the U.N. is a must. Then and only then may an international warrant be issued against any person or persons suspected of involvement in the perpetration of the crime in order to bring the accused persons to international justice. Such an international investigatory agency must enjoy a wider mandate in order to investigate not only the 1988 downing of the Pan American, but also other atrocities that have occurred worldwide. The main feature of the new international order should be non-selectivity in approach and objective. Otherwise, it would continue to be a suspect proposition.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN LESS than one year, the capitals of the colonial powers are once again exercising terrorist practices against the Arabs, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday with reference to present threats directed against Libya. The paper said that Washington, London and Paris are escalating the tension by urging various nations to line up against Tripoli which they accuse of being responsible for downing a civilian aircraft over Britain in 1988. Once again, the United States is being urged by Paris and London to take action and commit an aggression no less evil than that launched on Iraq, causing further sufferings and destruction to the Arab World, said the paper. The West's hatred for the Arabs is being displayed in the form of aggression, and there is no single Arab state that is insulated against such atrocity and evil onslaught from the West, the paper continued. Margaret Thatcher was instrumental in paving the ground for the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq in the Gulf war, and her successor John Major is now playing the same role in whipping up the campaign and urging Mr. Bush to launch aggression on Libya, the paper said. In less than one year, the Arab World is witnessing the Arab state being exposed to flagrant aggression and colonial power atrocities and brutality, the paper added. It said that the neo-colonialists stop at nothing in their ongoing lust for terrorism and for criminal action against the people of the Arab Nation.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily Monday strongly criticised the Water Authority of Jordan for failing to implement its water distribution programme during the past summer and urged it to adhere to the programme at least in the present season. Nazih said that the Water Authority can do nothing to reduce the problem of little rain or the presence of an influx of a large community of expatriates returning to the Kingdom from the Gulf, but can at least be fair in its distribution of water by adhering to its own distribution programme. The writer said that the summer witnessed increased complaints from the public about the insufficient amounts of water because the Water Authority did not apply the programme fairly and to all districts. There are areas in Amman which receive water day and night while supplies are cut for days on end in other districts, the paper noted. He said that the public realises the need for the austerity programme, due to the scarce water resources in the country, and supports endeavours to find new resources. But, he said, the public also expects a fair distribution of available amounts so that all people can have their fair share of water supplies.

The View from Fourth Circle

Treason or simplicity? The battle is engaged

By Rami G. Khouri

THE recent decision by the Jordanian Journalists' Association to expel Hattab and ban him from writing in Jordan because he gave an interview to Israeli television during the Madrid peace talks is both sad and simplistic — but perhaps inevitable during this moment of transition in the Middle East. I have met Mr. Hattab once or twice, shaken his hand, and probably exchanged a total of about two minutes of pleasantries with him. I do not read his articles regularly, and am not familiar with his political views, so I have no personal interest in defending him. I say the move against him is stupid because it is an exaggerated emotional response based on outdated and failed Arab political principles. It also runs contrary to the whole trend of political action principles. It also runs contrary to the whole trend of political action that we are involved in right now, and that defines the emerging new global reality of conflict-resolution through negotiations based on international law. It reflects the worst aspects of the Arab political mind and character.

The whole concept of the Madrid conference is to engage the Israelis in a political battle for peace and justice, in order to obtain the rights promised to us by international law and U.N. resolutions. We are unable to obtain those rights today through military action, due to the combination of Israeli militaristic frenzy, American acquiescence, and our own Arab political incompetence. Diplomacy, dialogue, negotiations and compromise are the means we have chosen as the best available alternative.

If our foreign minister and a large delegation of Jordanians, along with their colleagues from Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, the Gulf, and North Africa, are sitting in the same room and on the same table with the prime minister of Israel, looking him in the eye, and talking to him about peace, justice and coexistence — what is this if not engaging the enemy on the battleground of diplomacy and rational discussion? Jordan Television and Radio cover the peace talks. Jordanian officials, journalists and others in Madrid routinely meet with Israelis for off-the-record discussions. Jordanian academics share platforms with Israelis at international academic conferences. Jordanian passport holders living under Israeli occupation routinely meet with Israelis for political discussions. Jordanian diplomats around the world engage in diplomatic gatherings where Israelis are present, notably in the United Nations. Arab writers often have their articles reprinted in the Israeli press. All three Jordanian dailies reprint articles from the Israeli media. Many Arabs share stages with Israelis, debating, arguing, and generally working hard for our Arab national rights, fighting for peace and justice. Is all of this treason? If so, then half the Arab intelligentsia, and many government officials, should be locked up in jail, and Mr. Hattab should not suffer alone.

In this context, giving an interview to Israeli television is not an act of treason, but rather of rational and useful diplomatic engagement and political action. On my weekly interview show on Jordan Television, both the management of JTV and I share the view that one of our purposes is to address the people of Israel, to inform them, challenge them, engage them, shame them, and dare them to rise to the promise of peace and justice for all in this region. We have other audiences and objectives, of

course, but this is clearly one of them. I often ask my guests to address the Israeli people directly, to send them messages, warnings, admonitions or exhortations, and this is done regularly, as it was done by no less judicious a guest than His Majesty King Hussein.

It seems to me that one of the strongest tools we have in this stage of the historic national and diplomatic battle between Arabism and Zionism is our access to the mass media. We complained for many years that the Western press ignored us. Then we said that our own press was not credible. Well, things are different today. We have our own media with which we can address the enemy, if not the whole world. We have much greater access to the international media. And, we even have access to the Israeli media, which strikes me as a potentially important weapon in the battle we suffer.

To use the Israeli media to deliver our message directly to the Israeli people seems rather important — if we know how to use the media to our advantage. The Palestinians living under Israeli occupation do it all the time. Are we going to be more Palestinians than the Palestinians, more noble than nobility itself? Why do the Israelis make use of their media, and of the major Western media, as an effective tool of war, while we view our use of the Israeli media as an act of weakness, submission, and treason? Is it that we are stupid, or simply that we have been so psychologically bludgeoned by the Israelis that we allow them — once again — to anticipate and manipulate our exaggerated emotional reactions, and to defeat us through the consistency of our own self-destructive political provincialism and intellectual antiquity?

We would be fools — and we were, for many years, and many amongst us still are — to close our eyes to the full nature of the diplomatic struggle and to refuse to use every possible means of action available to us. To give an interview to Israeli television during the Madrid peace talks strikes me as a rather clever and useful move by Mr. Hattab. In that context, I think it was both acceptable and potentially productive. Mr. Hattab did not travel to Israeli Television, Sadat-like, and offer his services. He did not seek out the Israelis with an eye to signing a contract with them. He did not go out of his way to establish a long-term commercial agreement by which he would do regular commentaries for them. He did not offer to live in perpetual subjugation to the Israeli imperial will. He looked the enemy in the face, and told the truth — about our humanity, our rights, our hopes, and their violence and shortsightedness.

Mr. Hattab simply did what was the logical conclusion of the diplomatic effort that has defined this region since, oh, the 1973 Palestine National Council decision to set up an independent Palestinian authority on any part of liberated Palestine. There is general consensus on Palestinian and pan-Arab goals vis-a-vis the struggle with Israel. There is an actual face-to-face negotiation in progress. Arab and Israeli officials are shaking hands, making speeches, and every other minute doing battle before the television cameras of the world.

Madrid was a media circus, a jamboree of lights, sound and action, a magical stage for the Palestinians and the other Arabs to

dance as they have never danced before, to address the planet, and to dazzle the world. Television was the primary medium at Madrid. Israel was the ultimate audience we had to reach. Therefore, I would have thought it logical for us to use the most powerful medium available to reach the most important audience around. But we seem to fear logic, and to shun the new world mechanisms of power at our disposal. Mr. Hattab acted logically and rationally. It is not treason for him to address the Israelis over their own television — no more than our foreign minister sitting at the same table with the Israeli delegation — and it is certainly not the dangerous "normalisation" of relations with Israel that many people fear. Or is it more effective to ignore the Israelis, and instead to keep sending messages of fraternal support to the people of Brunei and Zimbabwe?

It would be a major service to the Palestinian and Arab cause we seek to serve for the Jordanian Journalists Association to snap out of its historic and professional sleep, and to grasp the power of the media as a tool of public diplomacy. We are very good at blaming the Western media for allowing itself to fall under the control or undue influence of pro-Israeli forces, but what do we do about it within our own journalistic horizons? Where are the members of the Jordanian Journalists Association who can provide the quality reporting and analysis that can be used internationally as a tool of battle, and as an intellectual sword of Arabism? Where are those Jordanian journalists who would stop acting like victims, and start thinking like victors?

The harsh and emotional reaction to Mr. Hattab's interview should not be dismissed or forgotten, because it hides an important political and psychological reality that we shall continue to deal with in the immediate future. The last two generations of Arabs, born and raised within an intellectual and political context of defeat, denial and deprivation, are suddenly asked today to forget the rules that have defined their entire lives. They are told today that it is alright to negotiate with Israelis, to sit with them at a table and talk peace, to accept Palestinian self-rule as a transitional arrangement, even to place their trust in the promise that the United States — as much the Great Satan for most Arabs as for the Iranians — has suddenly been transformed into our friend, our saviour, our protector, and the source of our deliverance from suffering, defeat, denial and deprivation.

It is all a bit too much to take in at one time. The Arab mind is congested, even confused. Our intellectual and emotional anchors have been moved suddenly, our world turned upside down, our sacred notions of national goodness thrown out the window. Mr. Hattab is the unfortunate victim of the Arab masses groping for their lost anchor, desperately holding on to a rope from the 1950s, clinging on to an escape route to the past should the current peace effort fail. It would be much more effective if we mustered our resources to fight our way to a better future, instead of succumbing to the fears, rigidities, mediocrities, and failures of the past. Either we get in there and fight for our place and our rights in the new world order we hear about, or we shall be condemned forever to suffer the perpetual humiliation and human deprivation of being the last, permanent victims of the bad old order.

After Madrid, the hard part seems to be coming

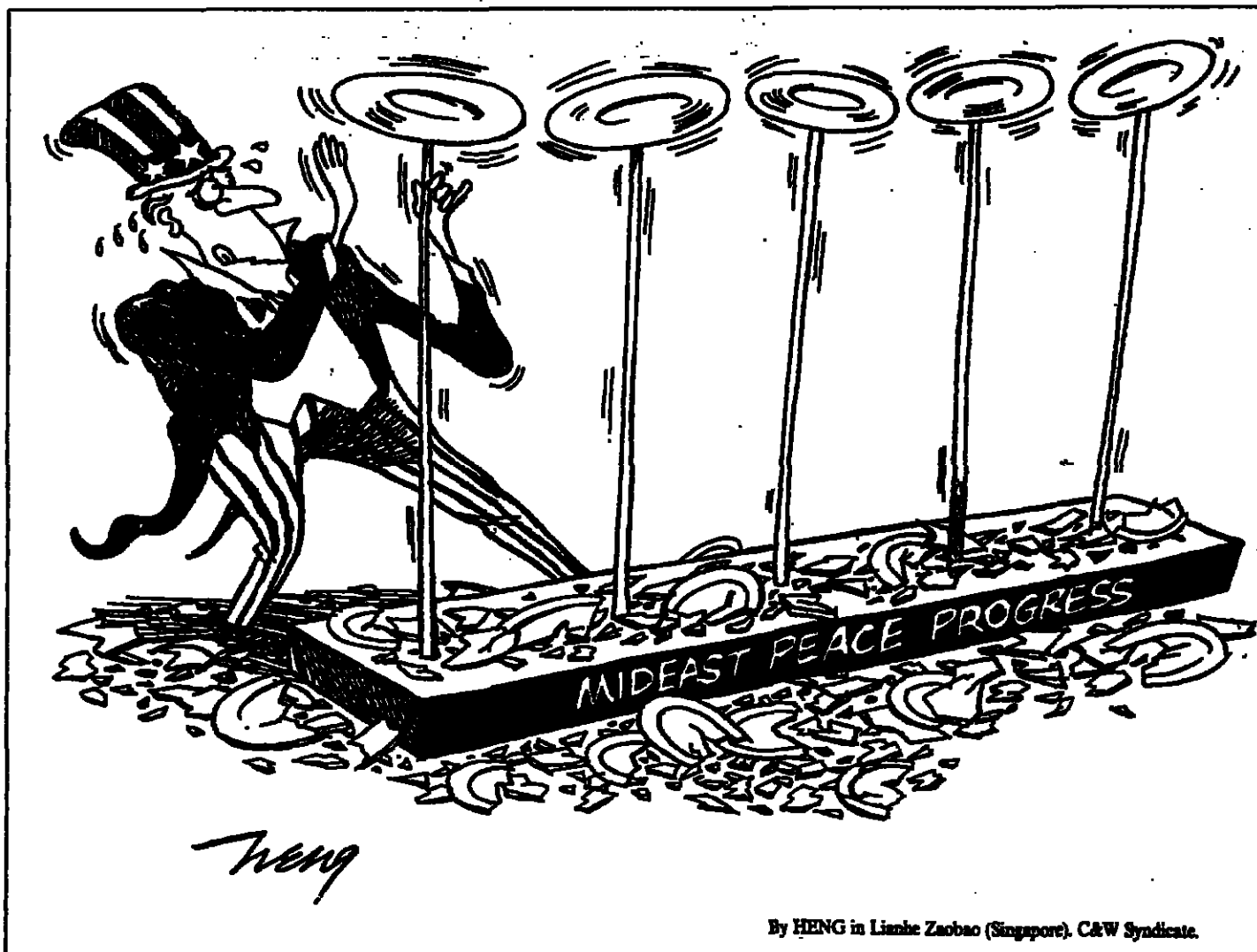
By Stephen S. Rosenfeld

WASHINGTON — Suddenly the Arab-Israeli conflict turns from an ostensibly insoluble thousand-year war into a latter-day postcolonial dispute ripe for resolution. All the considerations of history, justice and passion previously cited as insuperable barriers to compromise begin to be cut up into finite pieces capable of intelligent rearrangement. Politicians of the region (some more than others) and diplomats (mainly American) are shrinking the problem to size.

Could not all of this merciful magic have begun earlier? Yes, say those sensitive to the immense human and other costs of the Middle East's wars. But the stronger argument is that the process which began with the Ford and Carter diplomacy of the 1970s could not have picked up the requisite new momentum in the 1990s until conditions made it not only wise and unavoidable but profitable and safe.

Arabs had to arrive at the view that they had no choice but to accept Israel politically and psychologically and that they could do so and survive and gain. Egypt, which lost a peacekeeper, Anwar Sadat, to anti-Israel terrorism but stayed essentially on course, provided the crucial demonstration model. Israelis had to realise that, with the United States militarily and politically dominant in the world and with Israel the region's dominant military power, they could start accepting the risks of peace.

What risks? The Israelis still insist they will not yield up an inch of territory. But everyone in the Middle East understands that the Golan Heights will go back to Syria, perhaps at the start not to full and direct Syrian control but



By HENG in Limbo Zaobao (Singapore). C&W Syndicate.

at least to formal Syrian sovereignty. What it will take is the assurances of Israeli security, and Syrian arrival at an adult definition of peace.

In fact, there is no hurry for a Golan turnover. That is not just because Yitzhak Shamir is hang-

ing tough. It is because Hafez Al Assad shrinks from yielding the claim on power and Arab leadership that flows from his chosen role as lead antagonist of Israel. Fortunately, he is "no longer in a position, as he was in Lebanon in the 1980s, to spoil a regional

peace initiative.

Eventually, Mr. Assad may catch on that his policy is anachronistic and self-isolating and that by asserting it as he did at Madrid he loses Arab company and international standing. Meanwhile, a nearly two-decade

Syrian-Israeli truce holds steady, and Mr. Assad's bargaining position deteriorates nicely.

As for territorial withdrawal on the West Bank, Israel currently refuses to budge. Likud politics locks Mr. Shamir in, and after his personal triumph at Madrid the

Labour opposition, which accepts territorial compromise, cannot lay a finger on him.

But do not sell short the risk that Mr. Shamir did take at Madrid. He moved from formal embrace of a programme of Palestinian self-government to active negotiation, since now Israel has what it lacked before — a moderate Palestinian partner desperate for real gains. Mr. Shamir has done what he said he would never do. He has set Israel on the slippery slope that leads to a destination he cannot control.

For it is perfectly obvious that, even with the most restricted autonomy, the Palestinians will ask for more. The Israelis can deal with Palestinian disorder — terrorism, resistance, the intifada. But over time, with plenty of agony, they cannot fight off Palestinian order of the sort exemplified by the Palestinians' smooth Madrid delegation and by the rising tide of popular support for it on the West Bank.

Let us figure — I do — that the autonomy negotiation will be painful but will move ahead. Progress cannot come without Israeli concessions on the place and rate of new settlements. This will be at the crucial point where settlements convert from being a lever forcing Palestinian concessions to a card that Israel will find to its advantage to play in return for further Arab concessions.

This is the point at which the practice of mutual consent begins to overtake the familiar deadly pattern of one-sided imposition.

In such circumstances, the Israelis will not be able to avoid taking a deep second look at the nature of the Palestinian entity they are helping to draw into being and at the nature of their permanent security requirements. — The Washington Post.

Bush administration takes lumps on Syria

By Ruth Sinai
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration is taking a lot of heat over Syria.

Two events conspired in recent weeks to jack up the pressure: efforts to inveigle Syria into a second round of peace talks with Israel and Syria's acquittal in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

From Damascus and other Arab capitals, including Cairo, come strong urgings to remove Syria from a U.S. list of countries that support terrorism. Those on the list are barred from receiving most American-made goods.

Advocates of such a move,

among them officials in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, argue that Syria should be rewarded for its instrumental role in two of the administration's most significant foreign policy successes: the coalition which pushed Iraq out of Kuwait and the first-ever peace talks between Israel and all its Arab neighbours.

Syria, giving in to U.S. blandishments, held five hours of direct talks with its bitterest enemy, Israel, earlier this month. But the Syrian government has balked at participating in a second round of talks if these take place in Washington — as long as it's on the terrorist list.

Washington "poses problems

for us," said a senior Syrian official in Damascus last Tuesday.

Secretary of State James Baker is suggesting Washington as a compromise location for talks. Israel is demanding that they be held in the Middle East and Syria wants them in Europe.

Advocates of lifting sanctions argue that the government in Damascus has not itself been involved in terrorism since 1987.

They further argue that the government joined the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq and quelled terrorist groups based in Syria during the Gulf war.

But opponents, among the officials in the State Department's

Counter-Terrorism Office, point to a long list of terrorist groups that still operate in Syria or in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon.

Turkey, which has suffered thousands of dead in attacks launched by the Kurdish Workers Party, has urged the United States to keep Syria on the list, believing that the Syrians provide money and training bases to the guerrillas, said a diplomat who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

The State Department's annual 1991 report on terrorists around the world notes that among the groups hosted by Syria is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command

(PFLP-GC).

That organisation was initially believed by U.S. officials to be responsible for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in which 270 people, many of them Americans, were killed.

But U.S. officials now say they were wrong, and neither Syria nor the PFLP-GC were involved in that attack. Two Libyan intelligence operatives were indicted Thursday for allegedly carrying out that bombing. Libya has denied the accusation.

"A lot of people thought it was Syrians," President Bush said after the indictments were announced. "The Syrians took a bum rap on this."

Administration spokesmen firmly denied suggestions that the findings were motivated by political considerations.

"There was no political influence over this indictment. We followed the evidence where it led," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. "Syria is still on the terrorism list," he added. "No, there's no consideration being given to taking it off."

In order to remove a country from the terrorist-supporters list, the Secretary of State must certify to Congress that its government has fundamentally changed its policies and has promised to abstain from such activity in the future.

The partners' best remains to be seen

By Anthony Lewis

BOSTON — The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has been going on for so long that even in its pain there has been, for many, a kind of security. The established pattern of force and bitter words seemed safer than negotiating with the other side and lowering the barriers of hate.

A singular achievement of the talks in Madrid has been to make the idea of negotiation more attractive. Suddenly both sides were talking; living with the other in peace seemed possible.

Quite by accident, the effect of the Madrid talks on Palestinian thinking was quickly measured. The Chamber of Commerce in occupied Gaza held its first election in 25 years. With political elections prohibited by Israel, it was a rare test of sentiment.

Gaza has been a stronghold of the fundamentalist Islamic resistance movement, Hamas. But Hamas won only two of the 16 seats at stake, while pro-negotiation supporters of the PLO took 13 and an independent one. "The Chamber of Commerce elections are the message from the Palestinian streets to the peace conference," a member of the winning majority, Mohammad Qidwah, said.

The message that Palestinians are ready to negotiate tells Israelis that there are reasonable Palestinians, people not so different from themselves. Over the years I have met those Palestinians: middle-class people, many of them, with a high concentration of professionals. I always thought they were more like Israelis than any other people in the Middle East.

For ordinary Palestinians, with familiar aspirations for a decent life and a national identity, those few days in Madrid mattered much. For the Palestinian delegates spoke calmly and confidently. They seemed open and confident in dealing with Israel's delegates. They shook hands, they chatted, they met Israeli

journalists. None of that will make the substantive negotiations easy when they begin. But there is reason to think that many issues are negotiable within the agreed framework of an interim arrangement for Palestinian autonomy.

Twelve years ago, after Camp David, Sol Linowitz acted as the American mediator in talks on the nature of the proposed "autonomy." He points out that agreement was reached then on Palestinian administration in many areas of government. The hard question is how to deal with the building of new Israeli settlements. It is inescapable because the Palestinians cannot go into an agreement for an interim period knowing that at the end of it they will be worse off because there will be more settlements.

The right to build settlements is such an article of faith for Yitzhak Shamir's government that it is hard to imagine him forswearing it. But in politics a party may insist on having rights while in fact not exercising them. One can imagine Mr. Shamir saying that Israel has no plans for new settlements during the period of negotiation on final arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza. And there could be an agreed requirement of joint approval for certain building projects.

If that central issue is to be overcome, America will almost certainly, in time, have to play a part in proposing ideas. President George Bush has already made clear that he opposes the use of American funds to subsidize settlements that obstruct peace.

For the moment it is enough to note the good news of human respect between Israelis and Palestinians in Madrid. The Palestinian delegation leader, Haidar Abdul Shafi, said: "We have seen you at your best and at your worst, for the occupier can hide no secrets from the occupied." Israelis could say much the same. Maybe the best now has a chance to prevail — The New York Times.

West Bank waits for the barbed wire

By Shyam Bhatia

FROM the top of the church tower in the Christian village of Taybeh, the undulating landscape stretches all the way to the Dead Sea. An Israeli radar, strategically perched on an adjoining hill, can peer into the heart of Amman, in Jordan, and even sweep the main runway of Damascus airport.

Father Jack, the learned priest in charge of the Greek Catholic church, often takes visitors up to his tower so they can see the rolling pastures below that the Israeli army has requisitioned from Palestinian families, who have farmed the area for generations.

Experience has taught the Palestinians that orders of this kind are usually the prelude to formal confiscation. Within months they expect the first bulldozers to arrive to level the land for Jewish settlers, whether from the Soviet Union, Ethiopia, or more possibly the United States.

Military sources in Jerusalem said Palestinian suspicions were unfounded. "The area in question is for military training. Basically, we are talking about agricultural areas that will not be interfered with. We have no intention of changing the status quo or removing the people from there."

But the benign intentions of the Israeli army are challenged by the wording of military order number 32/91, signed by Israeli army commander, Danny Yatom, which states: "No one is allowed to enter the closed area (of the 33 villages) as long as this order is in effect without my permission and approval. Despite

this, permanent residents of the area will not be evacuated, but anyone who violates this order will be punished. Excluded are soldiers and policemen on duty."

Army "closures" are not new, but the scale of the latest order is breathtaking because it runs to almost the entire length of the West Bank, incorporating an area that is about 63 miles long and six miles wide. It amounts to more than 300,000 acres, or 31 per cent of the surface area of the West Bank.

These are the harsh everyday realities of Israeli occupation that challenge the meaning of the Middle East peace conference that starts in Madrid later this week. Many Palestinians who oppose the talks say there is nothing left to discuss since the Israelis have taken possession of

most of their land. The mayors of five West Bank villages have handed over a letter of complaint to the United States consul general in Jerusalem that details the injustice dealt out to them on the eve of the peace conference.

Naim Tayeh, a member of Taybeh village council, said "We feel as anyone would feel if someone came to their house and took everything in it. We plough this land, we plant it, this is where our sheep and goats graze."

"This is not the first time we've had such an order. In 1976 they cut down hundreds of olive trees for a new road. Before asphaltting it, they put up a few military tents and said it was temporary. Later the land was requisitioned by the military authorities, because we refused to lend or lease that land

to them." This time the land they are about to lose is prime agricultural property, traditionally used for grazing or for growing crops such as olives and plums.

Palestinian human rights activists say Israeli policy is to deprive the villages of their traditional sources of income, converting them into dormitory centres like the bantustans of South Africa.

"We assume that it is unacceptable to the international community that moves towards peace in the region be accompanied by the abrogation of our basic rights, the affirmation of which are fundamental to a just and lasting peace," the letter declares in a reference to army seizure of village properties.

"Not only is this action by the Israeli authorities a violation of our human, natural and legal rights but it is an obvious threat to our livelihood. We have all the corroborative documents to confirm our ownership of the land."

In Arab Jerusalem, figures released by the Palestinian Human Rights Information Centre show that Israel has taken control of 65 per cent of West Bank land since 1967. Army closures account for about half and other pretexts, such as building new roads and annexing so-called absentee property, make up the rest.

In case the message has not got across, Israel's right-wing housing minister, Ariel Sharon, announced his backing for a new settlement in the occupied Golan Heights, inaugurated 24 hours before the opening ceremony for the Madrid peace conference. — Observer.

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Between Shilo and Turmus Aiya — a gulf of hatred

By Ronit Yoeli

The Associated Press

SHILO — The kilometre between an Arab town and Israeli settlement spans a huge gulf of hate and mistrust on both sides.

Jewish settlers in this hill town mention a woman's slaying last week when asked about peace with Arabs. In nearby Turmus Aiya, Arab villagers watch grimly as bulldozers uproot olive trees for a new settler road.

The United States urges "confidence-building measures" towards an Arab-Israeli peace. "I see nothing that shows us confidence ... I see Rachel's grave outside my window," Ellen Silbers said Sunday, referring to last week's murder victim.

In Turmus Aiya, 75-year-old Sheikh Abu Hadba recalled the flight from his village inside Israel at the founding of the Jewish state.

"They kicked us out of our villages in 1948 and now they are taking our lands for the settlers," he said. "Let the settlers go back to where they came from ... the

Soviet Union and the United States."

The feelings are much like those of other Arabs and settlers crammed together in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where 112,000 Jews have moved since Israel captured the land in the 1967 Middle East war.

The territories' 1.7 million Palestinians have grown more desperate as 20,000 Jewish settlers have arrived in the past year. They see little hope in U.S. calls for Israel to surrender occupied land in exchange for peace.

Many settlers refuse to even think of giving up land. "We are here to stay," says Yonah Zoref of Shilo's governing council.

Last Monday, Shilo residents started a nearby settlement named Mitzpeh after Rachel Drucker, a 35-year-old mother of seven killed when gunmen opened fire on a bus headed to a rally to oppose giving up land.

The bus driver also was killed. Now, 10 families live there in mobile homes, but the settlers say they expect "a few thousand houses" in time.

Shilo was founded in 1978 near the site of the ancient Jewish capital of Shilo. Modern Shilo is 39 kilometres north of Jerusalem.

Almost 1,000 people live in the settlement. About 10 per cent are Americans, like some leaders of the settler movement. Four Soviet families have moved in from the recent wave of immigrants.

The settlers are religious Jews, and British-born Burukh Barin, 25, cited that as reason for not giving up the two-and-three-bedroom brick houses they've built.

"From the humanistic point of view, we captured this land and we should give it back. But I am a religious person and I believe God gave us this land," he said.

Mr. Zoref said he could see peace with Palestinians if they accept self-rule under Israeli sovereignty. "I do not believe there is really an entity called Palestinians," he said.

Ms. Silbers, who immigrated five years ago from the United States, suggested "they could make Jordan a Palestinian state" to solve the conflict. She said it

was possible Israel would give up some land but it would be "suicidal."

In Turmus Aiya, on the next hilltop, bulldozers were toppling olive trees for a road which will lead from Shilo to the settlement of Eli. Villagers said 50 hectares of their land was taken for the road, on top of 100 hectares confiscated earlier.

"It is very painful when I wake up in the morning and all I can see is Shilo ... built on the land of my grandparents," said Imad Odeh, 28, a shopkeeper.

"What has me more scared," he said, "is that one day the settlers will come and claim it as they did other places."

The villagers say Turmus Aiya is about 600 years old. The 2,500 residents include about a dozen refugee families, who on Sunday were being given food aid by U.N. workers.

Many of their fellow villagers have made the opposite journey from settlers, the Palestinians noted. Faced with dwindling land and few jobs, about 3,000 people from Turmus Aiya now live in the United States.

The village walls are scarred with blots of black paint sprayed by soldiers to erase anti-Israeli slogans. Like in most West Bank villages, youths still throw stones at troops and settlers who pass by.

U.S. faults Vietnam on pinning down fate of MIAs

By Jim Wolf

Reuter

WASHINGTON — The U.S. administration says Hanoi has stepped up cooperation but must do "much more" to help resolve the fate of Americans unaccounted for since the end of the Vietnam war.

The administration underlined on Tuesday that steps toward normalising bilateral ties, ardently sought by Vietnam, hinge on the politically charged POW/MIA issue. The abbreviation stands for prisoners of war and missing in action.

"Vietnamese officials could do much more to assist our efforts," U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney told the first public hearing of a new Senate panel investigating POW/MIA issues.

"To achieve the fullest possible accounting in a reasonable period of time, Vietnamese unilateral efforts as well as their participation in joint activities will have to dramatically improve," he added. At issue is the implementation

of a potentially long and winding road to full normalisation that officials have indicated could take two years or more.

Some 2,273 U.S. personnel are unaccounted for in Southeast Asia as a result of the war that ended in 1975 with communist victories in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Although the authorities there have consistently denied holding any Americans, "we do not, and never will, accept their denials as the last word," Mr. Cheney said.

But he added that the United States had no conclusive evidence that any Americans were being held against their will in Indochina.

Mr. Cheney's remarks illustrated U.S. unwillingness to spell out a specific timetable for normalising relations with Hanoi — a sensitive election-year issue in a country still smarting from the only war it has ever lost.

One of the six candidates for

the Democratic presidential nomination, Senator Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, for instance, criticised Mr. Bush on Monday for moving toward normalisation before winning human-rights improvements.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker announced last month that the United States would begin implementing a four-phase "roadmap" to normalisation, as promised, in return for Hanoi's cooperation in bringing about an all-party peace agreement in neighbouring Cambodia.

As a result, the United States lifted its travel limit on Vietnamese diplomats at the U.N. and softened its trade embargo to permit U.S. organised travel to Vietnam.

U.S. and Vietnamese diplomats are tentatively scheduled to meet in New York or Washington in late November for talks on normalisation issues.

Kenneth Quinn, a deputy assistant secretary of state who heads the Interagency Group on POW/MIA Affairs, testified that initial

steps would be small confidence-building measures.

"The roadmap is constructed in a way so that we could move rapidly or slowly, depending on Vietnamese cooperation," he said. "We are in control of the process."

Mr. Cheney said Vietnam was cooperating more fully than previously, notably by giving resident U.S. researchers access to wartime intelligence during the 14th joint U.S.-Vietnam field investigation that ended in September.

"But despite these improvements, we are still not satisfied with Vietnam's performance," he

said. "Promises to cooperate on live-sightings, improved helicopter transportation, and complete access to historical information remain only partially fulfilled."

Mr. Cheney said Vietnam's "foot dragging" on the repatriation of skeletal remains was especially frustrating — a reference to charges that Hanoi has warehoused bones and is doing them out strategically.

Vietnam's ambassador to the United Nations, who attended the Senate hearing under the newly relaxed travel policy, denied that his country was going slow on the MIA issue.

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Financial Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tel Aviv Close
U.S. Dollar	1.7850	1.7960
Sterling Pound	1.6190	1.6068
Deutsche Mark	1.4355	1.4279
Swiss Franc	5.5345	5.5008
French Franc	129.35	128.93
Japanese Yen	1.2630	1.2685

U.S. Dollar in International Markets
Data: 18/11/1991

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.57	4.93	4.93	5.06
Sterling Pound	10.37	10.25	10.25	10.12
Deutsche Mark	8.93	9.31	9.31	9.31
Swiss Franc	7.50	7.81	7.81	7.75
French Franc	9.31	9.25	9.25	9.25
Japanese Yen	6.31	6.21	5.93	5.65
European Currency Unit	9.62	9.75	9.75	9.81

Currency	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	360.55	6.90	Silver	4.06	.085

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Data: 18/11/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6800	0.6820
Sterling Pound	1.2207	1.2268
Deutsche Mark	0.4225	0.4246
Swiss Franc	0.3760	0.3784
French Franc	0.1236	0.1247
Japanese Yen	0.5266	0.5292
Dutch Guilder	0.3749	0.3768
Swedish Krona	0.1154	0.1160
Italian Lira	0.0559	0.0562
Belgian Franc	0.02013	0.02023

Other Currencies
Data: 18/11/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.77400	1.78300
Lebanese Lira	0.0770	0.0775
Saudi Riyal	0.18100	0.18160
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.18420	0.18500
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.21700
Omani Riyal	1.7400	1.74900
UAE Dirham	0.18420	0.18500
Greek Drachma	0.3700	0.3800
Cypriot Pound	1.4500	1.4600

CAI Indices for Amman Financial Markets
Data: 18/11/1991

Index	16/11/1991	Close	17/11/1991	Close
All-Share	125.08		125.12	
Banking Sector	106.23		106.35	
Insurance Sector	126.32		126.73	
Industry Sector	153.55		153.35	
Services Sector	134.69		135.14	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.7970/80	U.S. dollars	1.280/85
One U.S. dollar	1.605/65	Canadian dollar	1.810/15
	1.424/48	Deutsche marks	33.11/14
	5.4910/60	Dutch guilders	1213/1214
	128.85/95	Swiss francs	6.3075/25
	5.8725/75	Belgian francs	6.2450/2500
	6.3075/25	French francs	359.55/360.05
	6.2450/2500	Italian lire	
	359.55/360.05	Japanese yen	
		Swedish crowns	
		Norwegian crowns	
		Danish crowns	
		U.S. dollars	

Hyundai challenges Seoul

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's most powerful businessman threw down the gauntlet to the government Monday, saying he could not and would not pay unprecedented penalty taxes levied on his Hyundai group.

"Hyundai simply does not have the money to pay. And we have no intention of (paying)," Hyundai founder Chung Ju-Yung told a news conference.

Tax officials this month slapped penalty taxes totaling 136.1 billion won (\$181.5 million) on Hyundai, 10 of its 47 subsidiaries, Mr. Chung and nine members of his family for tax evasion.

The sum, the largest tax penalty ever here, amazed many South Koreans.

Mr. Chung, noted for his disciplinary management style and tough labour relations, told reporters he would fight the levy in court. He also took out large front-page advertisements in evening newspapers accusing the Office of National Tax Administration (ONTA) of exceeding the law.

Tax officials deny Mr. Chung, 75, was singled out because of his vocal opposition to government policies. But government officials have said privately the investigation is part of an effort by President Roh Tae-woo's administration to curb the huge influence of

the conglomerates. "The days when the Hyundai were virtual arms of the government and could dictate policy are over now," said a local stocks analyst.

Mr. Chung, the son of a poor farmer, still commands respect for building the small construction company he founded in 1947 into one of the country's two largest conglomerates — a symbol of South Korea's transition from a desperately poor agrarian nation to an industrial power.

Hyundai is the nation's largest car exporter and leading shipbuilder. Since the early 1980s it has expanded into electronics, semiconductors and petrochemicals.

Share analysts saw the tax probe as a first attempt to block transfers of wealth between generations of chaebol (conglomerate) families.

They said chaebol founders usually tried to complete asset transfers to heirs before death in order to secure family management control and avoid death duties.

Mr. Chung said in the advertisement that Hyundai had paid 26 billion won (\$35.1 million) in transfer taxes in the past two years. "We did not engage in tax evasion. We cannot accept this excessive taxation."

An ONTA spokesman said the

investigation was conducted "strictly and fairly" in accordance with tax laws.

Hyundai's size and wealth and power are resented by some in a country experimenting with democracy after nearly four decades of military-backed authoritarian rule.

The conglomerates worked hand-in-glove with authoritarian governments which funnelled funds into contracts to the chaebol in the name of development.

Mr. Roh, elected in 1988 after a popular revolt forced military strongman Chun Doo Hwan to concede a direct plebiscite, has tried to whittle down the power of the chaebol. Presidential elections are due next year.

Banks were ordered to channel credit towards smaller and medium-sized companies, the entrepreneurial sector. The chaebol were told to halt wasteful expansion into new and unrelated areas which blocked smaller would-be competitors.

They were ordered to sell substantial land holdings, freeing vast tracts for housing at a time of acute shortage.

The ONTA spokesman said Hyundai's assets would be seized temporarily if the courts rule against Mr. Chung. A five per cent surcharge would also be levied on the overdue amount.

'Low inflation hurts Britons'

LONDON (R) — Britain's inflation rate fell to 3.7 per cent in October — its lowest level for three-and-a-half years — boosting Conservative government hopes of an economic recovery ahead of general elections next year.

Prime Minister John Major described the official figures as "wonderful news." But financial markets took a less generous view and the opposition Labour Party was lukewarm.

"Any reduction in the rate of inflation is, of course, welcome, but it has been achieved at a terribly high price with 750,000 extra unemployed and record levels of business failures and home repossessions," said

Labour economic spokesman John Smith.

James Barty, an economist at Morgan Grenfell, said "the headline figure is slightly disappointing and the data shows that prices have risen in a number of areas."

Some economists were expecting inflation to fall as low as 3.3 per cent in October, below Germany's rate of 3.5 per cent.

The Conservative government is hoping lower inflation and interest rates will stimulate consumer demand and help the economy recover from recession in time for the election which must be called by mid-1992.

Britain's headline inflation rate has fallen sharply over the past

year from a peak of 10.9 per cent in October 1990.

But economists said the reasons for the fall were largely technical. Mortgage interest rates have come down and reductions to the controversial local government poll tax also trimmed the index.

The fall in underlying inflation — which strips out such factors — has been more subdued. In October inflation minus the impact of mortgage rate changes fell to 5.5 per cent.

Economists expect inflation to move up to around 4.5 per cent early next year as factors flattening the index drop out of the annual comparison.

Japan deports increasing number of illegal workers

TOKYO (R) — Japan deported an increasing number of illegal foreign workers in the first half of this year, with the number of Iranians ordered to leave rising more than four-fold, the ministry of justice said.

In a report issued Sunday, the ministry said Japan deported 12,265 such workers in the period, an increase of 31.7 per cent over the same period in 1989.

The number in the first half of 1990 was 23,100, but it was an unusual year because many foreigners volunteered for deportation ahead of a new labour law that increased penalties for employers using illegal workers.

In 1991, Koreans topped the list with 4,221, an increase of 27.4 per cent over 1990. Iranians were second with 2,225, an increase of 470 per cent, followed by Filipinos, Malaysians and Thais.

Nearly half the deported men worked in the construction industry and 35 per cent were in manufacturing.

Of the 3,087 women deported, 52.9 per cent worked as hostesses, with a further 20 per cent working in restaurants and other places of entertainment.

Severe labour shortages in Japan mean many employers are eager to take on illegal workers despite the penalties.

Many workers say authorities turn a blind eye to the problem because many factories would close without the workers.

On the other hand, rising crime committed by foreigners in Japan is putting pressure on authorities to crack down on the illegal workers.

The Nihon Keizai Shinbun newspaper quoted Monday Justice Minister Takashi Tawara as saying his ministry did not have enough manpower to deal with

the increasing number of foreigners entering Japan.

He repeated the official policy that, while Japan would continue to accept foreigners with skills or those who were learning them, it would not accept unskilled workers.

Nicaragua cuts army spending

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (R) — Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro's administration has presented to parliament a \$518 million 1992 budget that included a marked cut in army spending.

Spending on the 21,000-man popular Sandinista army was set at the equivalent of \$41 million, down from this year's military funding of \$70 million, Finance Minister Emilio Pardo told the national assembly.

Health and Education spending in 1992 was set to increase seven per cent over this year, while job-generating investment spending will jump 3.6 times to \$131 million, Mr. Pardo said.

Service on the country's \$9 billion foreign debt was set at \$53 million.

The army had 80,000 men when Mrs. Chamorro took office in April 1990, shortly before the end to the eight-year war between U.S.-backed Contra rebels and the former Sandinista government.

Independent deputy Moises Hassan said the \$41 million set for the army in 1992 was "more reasonable" than this year's funding and predicted the budget would have an easier time passing through parliament than in 1990.

Last year Mrs. Chamorro battled with deputies in her centre-right National Opposition Union (UNO) alliance who sought to chop \$20 million off the army's budget. They argued that the post-war military was funneling money to the opposition Sandinista National Liberation Front Party.

Dollars have become a virtual currency in Cambodia as its war-shattered economy struggles to rebuild after the 1975-79 Khmer Rouge rule when money was abolished.

Economic recovery has been further hampered by a U.S. trade embargo imposed after Vietnam invaded in December 1978 to evict the bloodthirsty Khmer Rouge.

Tycoon to swap pizza for heavenly bread

DETROIT (R) — The billionaire owner of a U.S. pizza chain and professional baseball team says his wealth bothers him spiritually and he may sell his businesses and possessions to prepare himself for heaven.

Tom Monaghan, a devout Roman Catholic, has amassed a fortune in art works, rare automobiles and real estate in addition to his domino's pizza empire and the Detroit Tigers ball club.

However, "I've always understood the (Bible) verse about the rich man getting into heaven," Mr. Monaghan, 54, said in an interview with the Detroit News published Sunday.

"None of the things I've bought, and I mean none of them, have ever really made me happy," he said. "Most of the time I was buying things to get attention, to have people notice me. That's the sin of pride, the worst sin of all, and I'm the guiltiest person."

"I'm the biggest hypocrite there is. So anything I've got that gives me pleasure only for selfish reasons, I'm selling," he affirmed.

Mr. Monaghan went for being nearly broke to being a billionaire, as estimated by Fortune magazine, by developing a network of pizza stores that promise home delivery in 30 minutes or less.

He paid \$53 million for the Tigers, \$25 million for a wooded retreat and golf course, \$8 million for a Bugatti automobile and millions more for homes and furniture designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Cambodia's exchange rate dips

PHNOM PENH (R) — The U.S. dollar has plunged on Cambodia's volatile khorbide market on the arrival of United Nations peacekeeping troops, merchant-moneychangers who control the currency market said Monday.

The dollar was trading at an unofficial rate of 1,105 riel Friday, down from a high of 1,200 last month, traders said. The bank rate of 1,000 riel is largely ignored.

"You could say that the arrival of the United Nations has pushed down the U.S. dollar," said one ethnic Chinese shopkeeper-moneychanger in his store on Phnom Penh's main achar ream street.

"I expect the rate to remain quite steady at around this level now that the U.N. is here to bring peace," he said.

The black market rate soared from 610 riel last January to a high of 1,315 in August. It stabilized after the signing of a peace accord on Oct. 23 to end 13 years of civil war.

Demand for U.S. dollars skyrocketed in the past few months when peace talks began to show progress and consumer goods flooded in, most smuggled across Cambodia's porous borders.

"There has been high demand for dollars because of all the imports, but with the U.N. coming in we expect a big inflow of dollars," the shopkeeper said.

Trying to keep pace with the black market, the government raised the official rate to 1,000 from 800 in August.

The rate has been fluctuating between about 1,100 and 1,105 since the U.N. troops and Sihanouk arrived. It can change several times in a day on the informal and sophisticated street market.

Dollars have become a virtual currency in Cambodia as its war-shattered economy struggles to rebuild after the 1975-79 Khmer Rouge rule when money was abolished.

Economic recovery has been further hampered by a U.S. trade embargo imposed after Vietnam invaded in December 1978 to evict the bloodthirsty Khmer Rouge.

Riyadh launches treasury bills to cover deficit

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — Saudi Arabia offered treasury bills to banks in the kingdom for the first time Monday in a bid to tap excess liquidity and help finance its budget deficit, Riyadh-based bankers said.

The Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) announced it was offering 1.5 billion riyals (\$400 million) worth of four, 13 and 26-week bills in a bid to commercial banks.

Economists say Riyadh's budget deficit swelled to \$16 billion in 1990 from a projected \$6.6 billion and a similar shortfall is expected in 1991.

Bankers calculated the yield to be 4.7889 per cent for the four week treasury bills, 4.9126 per cent for the 13-weeks and 4.9825 per cent for the 26-weeks.

This was about two basis points below the bid side of the interbank deposit market and in line with previous weekly issues of bankers security deposit accounts (BSDAs) which were suspended Saturday to make way for the bills, they said.

Initial response was positive. Bankers said they believed the bills, which will be issued Wednesday, would be oversubscribed.

"The rates are good for the market — there's room to manoeuvre and we're going for them," one treasury head said.

The treasury bills are expected to smooth out short-term cash flow problems for the government caused by the Gulf crisis.

Unlike the BSDAs, proceeds from their sale will go directly to the Saudi government.

Bankers say the bills are an improvement over the BSDAs because they are a fully negotiable instrument which can be resold to government agencies, corporate and private investors.

The are expecting SAMA to announce a repurchase and reverse repurchase facility which would translate into a floor and ceiling for return on overnight funds in the kingdom's undeveloped interbank market.

The reverse repurchase facility would give bankers another outlet for excess funds and provide another tool for SAMA to control excess liquidity, bankers say.

SAMA has informed banks it will also issue 52-week bills on Nov. 26. Those offerings are expected to continue on a monthly basis. The other maturities will be issued every week.

In line with set policy, SAMA did not announce the yield on the bills because of sensitivity over a Muslim ban on usury.

The amount of the bills are expected to vary from week to week depending on the government's financing requirements.

Saudi Arabia borrowed \$7 billion from foreign and domestic banks in its first syndicated credit this year to help cover Gulf crisis costs estimated at between \$50 to \$65 billion.

It postponed announcing a 1991 budget because of difficulties in projecting oil revenues and war-related expenditure.

Economists believe most of the kingdom's war-related costs have been paid and provided oil revenues remain strong in 1992, it will not have to seek more sovereign loans.

Turks make plans to turn Istanbul into fashion centre

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkey, one of the world's leading textile manufacturers, is making plans to become a major supplier of ready-made clothing to the Soviet Union and East European countries, a senior industry official said.

"Istanbul will become the fashion centre for 500 million people in the Soviet Union and the former Warsaw Pact countries in eastern Europe," said Hasan Arat, chairman of the Turkish Clothing Manufacturers Association.

He said in an interview the association submitted a project to move used cotton yarn machinery from Turkey to the cotton-rich Soviet Turkic republics.

"They grow a lot of cotton there but don't have the technology or machinery," he said.

The Soviet Union is the world's third biggest cotton grower and second largest exporter, with exports of 490,000 tonnes in 1991. Uzbekistan led Soviet cotton production with 61 per cent, followed by Turkmenistan with 17.5 and Tajikistan with 10 per cent.

"It will allow us to export yarn and cloth from the Soviet Union at very competitive prices," said Mr. Arat, "and it will create access for us into these markets."

Mr. Arat said that by the end of the decade Turkey would buy up to \$8 billion worth of new machinery from countries like the U.S., Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Japan.

Turkey is the world's sixth largest textiles producer and top exporter of textiles and ready-made wear to the European Community (EC), ranking seventh in world cotton production and eighth in wool.

Textiles are Turkey's largest export, making up 30 per cent of the total in 1990 with over \$4 billion.

Mr. Arat said joint ventures could be set up to exploit opportunities in the cotton-growing Soviet republics.

was conducted on overall bilateral ties to mark the 50th anniversary of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour.

Asked which country was to blame for trade problems, 16 per cent of Japanese said Japan and 23 per cent the United States. Among Americans, Japan scored 43 per cent and their own country 19 per cent.

Most Japanese thought a government envoy should visit Pearl Harbour on the Dec. 7 anniversary, but most Americans said there was no such need.

Mainichi's survey of 2,000 Japanese and 3,000 Americans

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Indonesian forces execute Timor witnesses — Australian sources

SYDNEY (R) — Australia-based opponents of Jakarta's rule over East Timor accused Indonesian troops Monday of committing a second massacre in the territory.

The Timorese sources, quoting what they termed eyewitnesses inside East Timor, said Indonesian soldiers Friday executed 70 to 80 witnesses of last Tuesday's shooting of mourners in Dili, an incident which sparked international protests.

In Jakarta, Indonesian Armed Forces spokesman Nurhadi Purwosupitro denied the executions had taken place. "The report is a big lie," he told the official Antara News Agency.

Antonio Sampaio of the East Timor News Agency, which supplies Portuguese-language newspapers and radio programmes in Australia, said contacts in Dili reported that the second incident took place early Friday.

He said soldiers of the 700 and 744 Battalions took civilians, arrested during Tuesday's clash or in the house-to-house searches that followed, in four military trucks to a place 15 kilometres west of Dili.

Mr. Sampaio said the civilians were then "executed in cold blood" at Alto de Comoro, a site favoured by the military for secret executions of rebel sympathisers.

"They were taken from Tardes and Montiana prisons in Dili in four military trucks," said Mr. Sampaio, who is also a correspondent in Australia for Lisbon's *Diario de Noticias* daily newspaper.

The majority were arrested at the memorial service and the rest later rounded up by the military.

Mr. Sampaio said civilians and priests in Dili, and contacts in the Fretilin Separatist Movement in both Dili and Lisbon, confirmed earlier telephone reports he had received of the incident.

"Abri (the military) is not as brutal as that. The Timorese people are our own people," he said. The army says 19 people were killed when troops shot at people attending a memorial service in the East Timorese capital of Dili Tuesday. Other groups say up to 180 died.

Timorese sources in Australia said the security forces were still searching homes in Dili and kidnapping civilians who saw Tuesday's shooting in the former Portuguese colony annexed by Indonesia in 1976.

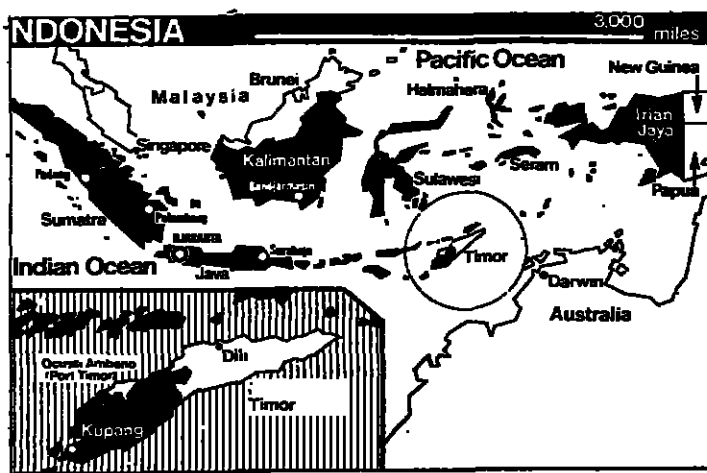
Mr. Sampaio said latest reports put the death count from last Tuesday's shootings at 183, with another 296 people in prisons or military hospitals. He said some of the mourners gunned down Tuesday had since died in hospitals, where conditions were poor.

A representative in Melbourne of the Fretilin Movement also said he had received telephone reports that Indonesian troops were searching for eyewitnesses to eliminate them before the start of a government inquiry.

"People were crying on the telephone, asking for help from the UNO (United Nations) to stop these killings," said Abel Gutierrez, who is also head of the local East Timorese Association.

He said he heard eyewitness accounts that the prisoners "were naked, blindfolded and with their hands tied behind their backs."

"The Indonesians are still kidnapping youths from homes, especially those living near the cemetery (where last week's shootings occurred)," he said.



The army says 91 people were injured, including two soldiers, Tuesday but has refused to let anyone including relatives visit the hospital where they are being treated.

A former Timorese resident with family in East Timor, who asked not to be named, also told of an incident Friday. He said one woman in Dili reported that 19 of her family and friends were taken away by the military and killed.

Mr. Sampaio's sources said there was heavy fighting between Indonesian troops and Fretilin guerrillas in the Timorese regions of Baucau, Los Palos, Viqueque and Same. The latter is isolated from the rest of Timor.

Diplomats and foreign journalists just returned from Dili said they had not heard any reports of killings Friday. But they said the military was continuing to round up youths suspected of involvement in last Tuesday's demonstration.

They said some of those injured were too frightened to go to hospital.

Officials were not immediately available for comment on the reports of killings last Friday.

In the Australian capital Canberra, unions imposed a blockade on Indonesia's embassy Monday in protest against last week's killings.

"The purpose of applying the picket is to bring them (the Indonesians) to heel internationally," Canberra Trades and Labour Council (TLC) Secretary Charles McDonald said.

"It's the whole Indonesian government which is responsible for the slaughter which has taken place in East Timor," he told about 20 unionists outside the embassy.

The TLC hopes to stop all goods and services being delivered to the building, surrounded by a two metre fence.

Civilians to be evacuated as Vukovar fights last stand

ZAGREB (R) — The Serb-led Yugoslav army pounded diehard Croat fighters in Vukovar Monday and warned them to surrender as preparations were made to evacuate trapped civilians.

With Vukovar virtually in its control, the army launched new attacks Monday on Osijek, Zadar Port and areas near Dubrovnik, Croatian radio said.

The army demanded unconditional surrender by some 1,500 Croat soldiers still offering pockets of resistance in Vukovar, besieged and shelled by the army for nearly three months.

European Community (EC) monitors and International Red Cross teams were on standby to rush in once the battle is finally over to help bring out the sick, wounded, women and some 2,000 civilians.

Croatia admitted defeat in Vukovar Sunday and urged the army to ensure the safety of 14,000 civilians who had lived through the siege cowering in cellar shelters.

A Croatian National Guard spokesman said the remaining fighters there would never give up, but the Belgrade-based news agency Tanjug said negotiations on surrender were under way.

The loss of Vukovar is a severe blow for Croats, for whom the city — now little more than rubble after street-by-street battles — had become a symbol of defiance in the face of overwhelming army might.

Diplomats said it meant rival Serbia had achieved one of its main goals which could help speed up talks on a political settlement: to end the fighting.

Several thousand people have been killed since Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia in June, sparking a rebellion by its Serb majority which Serbia and the army backed.

An EC-brokered ceasefire, the 13th to date, came into effect Saturday to try to pave the way for United Nations peacekeeping forces but only temporarily dampened the fighting.

Croatian radio said fighting flared again Monday near the besieged port of Dubrovnik, still in Croatian hands.

The army fired more than 100 artillery shells on the Dubrovnik River area a few kilometres north of the ancient walled city, it said.

The historic old town of the port of Zadar was bombarded by mortars, a woman was killed in fighting in a nearby village and rockets were fired at the eastern Croatian capital of Osijek.

Tanjug said Croat forces had fired on the army near Novska on the closed Belgrade-Zagreb Motorway.

Croatia suffered a string of demoralising defeats at the weekend to add to the fall of Vukovar.

It lost control of Slunj, a besieged town 130 kilometres south of Zagreb whose fate Croats watched almost as closely as that of Dubrovnik and Vukovar.

Several thousand Croats from the city fled east into the neighbouring Republic of Bosnia, police said.

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Quayle: Jokes do not bother me

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle has said he did not mind being the butt of endless jokes by stage and television comedians.

"It doesn't bother you, does it? Or does it?" interviewer David Brinkley asked Mr. Quayle on ABC-TV. "No, it doesn't," said Mr. Quayle, who is often portrayed by humorists as glib and awkward. Late-night television jokes about Mr. Quayle's verbal gaffes, his inexperience in government and his lack of military service have plagued him since President George Bush picked him as a 1988 running mate to the astonishment of party leaders.

In the interview, Mr. Quayle was not asked about the Donnesbury comic strip appearing in newspapers around the United States suggesting that the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) was hiding a file that cleared Mr. Quayle of allegations that he bought drugs in 1983. Mr. Quayle has denounced Donnesbury author Gary Trudeau for the series, which ran last week. Some newspapers dropped the strip for the week because they felt it was unfair to Mr. Quayle.

The Indianapolis Star newspaper, which is owned by Mr. Quayle's family, published an article about the DEA file last week after it was shown to the paper by a federal prosecutor. The U.S. Justice Department said it was investigating to see if disclosure of the file was authorised.

Most Americans want to live to the age of 100

WASHINGTON (R) — Despite all of today's problems with the economy, violence, illegal drug use and the appearance of new diseases such as AIDS, a majority of Americans hope they will live to be 100 years old, according to a survey released Sunday.

A survey conducted by the alliance for ageing research found that 66 per cent of Americans want to live to be 100 but only six per cent think they will make it. Most were optimistic that science would find cures to major diseases in their lifetime, including cancer, AIDS, and Alzheimer's disease.

Three-quarters said they were concerned they may lose independence in their later years by stroke, broken bones or general physical decline. Some 78 per cent said they preferred death from a sudden illness rather than suffering a chronic illness and lingering in a nursing home. The alliance is a non-profit group to promote research into problems of the elderly.

Churchill's hat sold for \$6,600

LONDON (AP) — Winston Churchill's famous Homburg hat with his initials embossed in gold was sold for \$6,600 (\$1,750) Friday, auctioneers said.

Christie's auction house said the buyer did not want to be identified. Britain's wartime prime minister wore the hat during state visits and other formal occasions. Called Homburg after the place in Prussia where it originated, it is a felt hat with a crown dented from front to back and a stiffened brim turned up slightly at the sides.

Beatles guitar, valued at \$300,000 fetches only \$70,000

CHAMBLEE, (AP) — An acoustic guitar used by John Lennon in the Beatles' early days was valued at \$300,000 but went for \$70,000 at an auction. Several hundred pieces of fab four memorabilia were sold by the Great Gatsby's auction house. President of the auction house, Dave Tribble, said the economy was to blame for the low price of the Lennon guitar. It was purchased by a rock 'n' roll memorabilia collector from Colorado who asked to remain anonymous, Mr. Tribble said. A harmonica used by Lennon to record the group's first album sold for \$6,500. It had been expected to bring between \$3,500 and 5,000. The guitar was the priciest item sold during the two-day auction that began Friday.

Other items included: A gold record presented to Paul McCartney for selling a million copies of Hey Jude sold for \$20,250; a Starr, \$475 for McCartney, \$275 for George Harrison and \$950 for Lennon; a poster featuring the group's final performance in San Francisco in 1966 sold for \$1,075. Also auctioned was a portrait of the Beatles painted by Lennon's first wife, Cynthia. She had presented the painting to Southsea Rite Children's Hospital in Atlanta 10 years ago. It brought \$3,700 for the hospital at the auction.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Salvador army chief linked to killings

WASHINGTON (R) — A senior U.S. congressman has said in a report that he had information suggesting that Salvadorean Defence Minister Emilio Ponce and other high officials planned the 1989 killings of six Jesuit priests. Representative Joe Moakley, chairman of the House of Representatives Task Force on El Salvador, said the information about the murders of the six priests, their cook and her daughter, came from sources in the Salvadorean Armed Forces and elsewhere that he believed were in a position to know what happened. "According to these sources, the decision to murder the Jesuits was made at a small meeting of officials held at the Salvadorean military school in the afternoon prior to the murders," Mr. Moakley said in a report to the other task force members, all Democrats.

Kennedy Smith 'contemplated suicide'

BOSTON (Agencies) — William Kennedy Smith says he contemplated suicide after he was accused of rape. In an interview in Monday's Boston Herald, Mr. Smith also professed his innocence but hinted that he had considered a plea bargain to avoid a sensational trial. "I thought about everything, from suicide to every option you can possibly imagine," Mr. Smith said. "There hasn't been one thing I haven't considered in my mind before doing this," he said. "But now I'm looking forward to it. I think I'm going to get justice, and I think the truth is going to come out. I can't wait." Meanwhile in a surprise move, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis will appear at the rape trial of Mr. Smith next month, a source close to the case said. The former first lady, who a second source said decided to attend the trial only after family infighting, will sit with several other members of the Kennedy clan to show her support for Mr. Smith, 31. Defence lawyers believe Onassis's presence in the West Palm Beach courtroom will bolster the credibility of Mr. Smith's claim that he had consensual sex with the woman and did not rape her. Onassis is Smith's aunt by marriage.

11 killed in South African violence

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Eleven people were killed in black faction fighting, including seven people shot to death when gunmen raked a party with automatic weapons, police said Monday. Police said gunmen armed with AK-47 automatic weapons attacked the party Sunday night in the black township of Vosloorus, near Johannesburg. Seven other people were injured in the attack. Initially police said three people had been killed after they were fired on in a van. Police officers were unable to explain why the account of the attack was later changed. In other violence, police said Monday they found the charred body of a woman who had been burned to death in Tokoza township outside Johannesburg. Police said three people died in separate incidents during the weekend in Natal province. The reports gave few details.

Georgian fighters shell Ossetian city

MOSCOW (AP) — Georgian nationalists attacked the South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali during the weekend with artillery and machine-gun fire and grenades, the Soviet News Agency (TASS) reported. Eight people were seriously wounded and 13 houses were destroyed in the shelling of the autonomous region of the Georgian Republic early Saturday, TASS said. The report said the Georgians used new types of artillery "of great destructive power" in the attack. TASS said children were among the wounded. Meanwhile, TASS said, "there is a disastrous shortage of food, medicines and fuel in the city. There are apprehensions that the city may find itself without electricity, water and gas in coming days."

Americans see Japan as rival

TOKYO (R) — Three out of four Americans regard the Japanese as rivals, while Japanese tend to see Americans as partners, a newspaper poll showed Monday. The Asahi Shimbun poll, taken a few weeks before the 50th anniversary of the Pearl Harbour attack which brought the two countries to war, said 77 per cent of Americans thought of Japanese as rivals and just 21 per cent as partners. In contrast half the Japanese polled saw the relationship as a partnership. Just 40 per cent saw it as one of rivalry. The two sides agreed on one point — the main area of competition is bilateral trade, with the huge U.S. deficit still hanging like a dark cloud over the relationship. The Asahi poll, carried out in the two countries early this month, showed Americans thought of Japan as a country with an old history and culture, which excludes foreigners and foreign influences, has great technology, and buys up American real estate. Japanese saw the United States as a free country with a lot of drugs and crime.

Rao emerges stronger from Indian by-elections

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and his Congress Party emerged stronger Monday from a series of by-elections but failed to recover ground in a key northern state.

Congress won seven of the 10 parliamentary seats declared by Monday afternoon. Mr. Rao established an Indian record majority of more than 580,000 votes in winning a seat in his home state of Andhra Pradesh, where Congress hoped to pick up another.

"All in all, quite satisfactory both for the prime minister and the party, but we would have hoped to do better in Uttar Pradesh," one senior Congress official said.

Uttar Pradesh is India's most populous and politically powerful state with 85 members in the 545-seat parliament.

Mr. Rao is only the second Indian prime minister to come from a state other than Uttar Pradesh. Congress was almost wiped out in the northern state in May and June elections, when the Hindu revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took power.

As results came in from a series of Uttar Pradesh assembly by-elections, there was no sign of the BJP losing any of the popularity, stemming from a Hindu-Muslim row over a religious site in the state, which swept it to power.

Of the 17 assembly seats declared by Monday afternoon, the BJP had won 13. Congress had won none.

In the parliamentary by-elections, however, the results were considerably more cheerful for Mr. Rao and Congress.

The weekend polls were seen as the first popularity test of a government that has made near revolutionary changes to an economy in crisis, and Congress and its supporters considered the results a pass mark.

"A cheering verdict," the pro-Congress National Herald newspaper called the results in a front-page editorial.

"Mr. Narasimha Rao has completed 150 days in office with the satisfaction of finding that his style of consensus politics and economic reforms are widely acceptable to the people," it declared.

Congress insiders said they were also a test for the 70-year-old Rao, who had a major heart operation last year.

South Korea, the world's last remaining hardline Stalinist state, to accept international inspection.

Despite some press speculation here and elsewhere, both U.S. and South Korean military planners have apparently ruled out preemptive military action against North Korea's known nuclear facility at Yongbyon, 90 kilometres north of Pyongyang.

South Korean Defence Minister Lee Jong-Koo told local reporters here at the weekend that the two sides would not discuss military actions to force North Korea to accept inspection but would try "all other means."

Mr. Lee and Mr. Cheney also will discuss a timetable for withdrawal of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons. U.S. newspapers have said about 100 weapons are stored at Kumsan Air Base, 170 kilometres south of Seoul.

Another major issue is the continuing withdrawal of U.S. troops.

Last year, the United States announced about 7,000 troops, mostly air force and army service personnel, would be withdrawn through to the end of 1992 when troop strength would level off at about 36,000.

The United States would like to withdraw additional troops but the number and pace of the withdrawal will be determined by the North Korean response to international pressure on its nuclear programme.

After talks in Seoul, the U.S. defence officials will visit Japan where Mr. Cheney will conduct a review of Far Eastern security

Son Sann, delays return to Cambodia

BANGKOK (R) — A guerrilla leader due to return from exile to join Cambodia's National Reconciliation Council said Monday he had postponed his homecoming because he could not find housing or an office in Phnom Penh.

Son Sann, head of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), said in a statement he and his colleague Leng Mouly earlier "need to return to the Cambodian capital Tuesday for the first time since the 1970s."

"But they have to postpone their scheduled return, failing to find proper accommodation and office for the KPNLF party," the release said.

Mr. Son Sann told reporters last week he would live in a tent if necessary upon his return.

A spokesman for the KPNLF, the smallest of three guerrilla factions that battled the Vietnamese-backed Phnom Penh government for years, said the two had tentatively rescheduled their return for Nov. 25 or 26.

Mr. Son Sann and Leng Mouly hold the two seats of the Western-backed KPNLF on a Supreme National Council (SNC) which also includes representatives of the Cambodian government and two other guerrilla groups.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the titular head of one of those rebel factions in the past, returned to Phnom Penh Thursday as head of the SNC under a peace plan signed by the warring sides in Paris last October.

The SNC will represent Cambodia's sovereignty as the U.N. helps organise elections expected to be held in 1993.

Mr. Son Sen, a senior member of the Khmer Rouge, the biggest guerrilla group, flew back to

Son Sann, delays return to Cambodia

Phnom Penh Sunday to take his seat on the SNC.

Guerrilla sources said Khieu Samphan, the nominal head of the Khmer Rouge, was expected to return later this week.

The head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Federico Mayor, will meet Prince Sihanouk and Prime Minister Hun Sen during a trip to Cambodia from Nov. 28 to Dec. 1, the U.N. said Monday.

Mr. Mayor will visit the ancient temple complex of Angkor Wat in northwestern Cambodia and declare it a world heritage site.

Khmers consider Angkor Wat, built between the ninth and the thirteenth centuries, an embodiment of their culture.

But years of guerrilla fighting, vandalism and exposure to the weather have threatened its survival.

S. Korea looks to U.S. response on North's nuclear programme

SEOUL (R) — South Korea plans to ask the United States during joint military strategy talks this week to beef up its combat capability here to counter North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons programme, news reports said Monday.

The influential Chosun Ilbo newspaper, quoting a senior military official, said Seoul would ask U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney to supply more advanced weapons to the 39,000 Americans troops stationed here.

Mr. Cheney arrives Tuesday for three days of talks with South Korean defence officials on military strategy and other security concerns. He will be joined by General Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Defence Ministry declined to confirm the story.

The newspaper said the requested weapons could include Stealth fighter-bombers and the Patriot air defence system.

"There are concerns that the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear arms and the gradual pull-out of U.S. troops here would make the North Korean military adventures consider this a drastic reduction of defence ability," the official said, according to the newspaper.

Therefore the government is positively studying a proposal that the United States reinforce its troops stationed in Korea by providing them with the most up-to-date weapons and military equipment," he said.

Mr. Cheney told reporters in Los Angeles last week that North Korea's nuclear programme

would be the first item on the agenda of the annual security talks.

Diplomats and analysts said other issues to be discussed include a timetable for the withdrawal from South Korea of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons and a further withdrawal of American troops.

The issues are interconnected and pose a thorny challenge to the United States and its north-east Asian allies who fear that Pyongyang's development of nuclear weapons will destabilise the entire region.

North Korea has insisted it is not developing nuclear weapons, but has refused to open its programme to international inspection, insisting that U.S. weapons be withdrawn from the Korean peninsula.

In September, U.S. President George Bush said U.S. tactical weapons would be scrapped worldwide.

While U.S. officials declined as a matter of longstanding policy to comment on specifics, Seoul officials clearly implied Mr. Bush's statement meant that American nuclear weapons would be withdrawn from South Korea.

In a further challenge to North Korea, South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo earlier this month renounced on behalf of his country the development, use or storage of nuclear weapons. North Korea dismissed Mr. Roh's dramatic statement as empty words.

Analysts say the issue now under debate between the United States and its allies is how to force

arrangements in the post-cold war era with his newly-appointed Japanese counterpart Sohei Miyashita.

Mr. Cheney and Mr. Powell are expected to meet top Japanese defence officials to discuss a dispute over Japan's cancellation of orders for American-made early warning aircraft, and to discuss additional support for the 40,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan.

South Korea Monday accused Washington of slowness in transferring advanced defence technology and said it was considering looking for European and Soviet suppliers.

Delegates to an annual U.S.-South Korea meeting on cooperation in the defence industry complained that Washington had been uncooperative in making transfers, a Defence Ministry statement said.

"The (U.S.) wall for protecting its technology has been thick and in particular, it is almost impossible for us to cooperate (with the United States) in high-technology transfers," the statement said.

The ministry gave no details of technology it said it had been denied.

But it said that since 1971, South Korea had received only 16 U.S. technological transfers to manufacture military goods here even though it bought more than 70 per cent of its foreign military equipment from the United States.

"Our defence industry now faces hardship due to our limit on technological development," the statement said.

It said it could overcome the problem through technological cooperation with European nations and the Soviet Union, with which Seoul established full diplomatic ties in September 1990.

Meanwhile in Tokyo, Gen. Powell said American forces will remain committed to defending Asia despite budget cutbacks following the end of the cold war.

Gen. Powell met Admiral Yasushi Sakuma, chairman of Japan's Joint Staff Council, and Defence Minister Sohei Miyashita.

According to a Japanese Defence Ministry spokesman, Gen. Powell said military ties centring on the U.S.-Japan security treaty should be strengthened despite drastically reduced superpower tension.

Gen. Powell told Mr. Miyashita that Washington would continue efforts to maintain its forward deployment in the region although budget constraints had forced some cutbacks.

"The United States should not do anything in the region, such as a massive pullout, that would arouse suspicion among the countries in the region," Gen. Powell was quoted as saying.